The Tenth Annual Christian Conference, on the Wabash, met at Bethsaida, Oct. 16th, 1827.

Elder John M'Crary was chosen *Moderator*, and Joshua Lindsey, *Clerk*.

Elders present—John M'Crary, Henry D. Palmer, Joseph Wassan, James Pool, James Moutray, and David M'Gahey.

Unordained preacher present—Joseph Ballard.

Exhorters present—William Blanchard, John Boren, and Benjamin Wiers.

Letters of Correspondence from the following Churches were received and read:—*Union, Bussorun, Liberty, Grand-prairie, Bethsaida, Springhill, Philadelphia, Village-prairie, Barney's-prairie, Coffee, Allison-prairie.* (A few Churches within the bounds of this Conference were not represented.)

Conference proceeded to open a door for the reception of members.

Elder Joshua Lindsey was received by letter. Brother Moses P. Conduit was received, and a presbytery appointed to ordain him to the Eldership. Brother Samuel Abbott was received and licensed to exhort. Brethren James Y. Baird and William Blanchard were licensed to preach.

Unanimously agreed, That the preachers of this Conference *carefully* impress on our Churches, the necessity of *a strict adherence to Gospel Discipline*, and of *a punctual attendance at our Church-meetings*

Unanimously agreed, That this Conference still adhere to a former minute, relating to the propriety of there being "A General Christian Conference established at some convenient place in the Western States, in which all the Christian Conferences in those States should be represented."

Agreed, That our next Conference be holden at Springhill, (Lawrence county, Ill.) on Wednesday before the second Lord's day of Oct. 1828, beginning at 10 o'clock, A. M.

JOHN M'CRARY, *Moderator*.

John Lindsey, *Clerk*.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM ELDER JOHN SECREST TO THE EDITOR.

"The work of the Lord is going on in this country (Belmont and the adjacent counties, Ohio.) hundreds of souls are inquiring for truth. Partyism and sectarianism are fast falling, and the gospel of the Son of God is gaining ground. We have immersed some hundreds this summer past. It is no uncommon thing for 30 or 40 to profess faith in the Son of God at one meeting, and numbers are baptized in a day. I baptized as many as 65 at one meeting.

Farewell, JOHN SECREST."

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. II.] GEORGETOWN, KY. APRIL 1828. [No. 6.

NEWS FROM IRELAND

The following extract is the conclusion of Mr. Montgomery's Speech before the Synod of Ulster.

"I see, on the other side of the house, a gentleman who has long been a leading member of this body, and who has lately distinguished himself both from the pulpit and the press. I refer to my friend Mr. Stewart, whose sermon in defence of Orthodoxy I hold in my hand. In the preface to this discourse he tells the world, what I knew long ago, that he was first a Calvinist in his boyhood, that he was afterwards very sceptical on the doctrine of the trinity, and that it was only in the year 1825 he turned his attention to the Bible to see if it contained what he *now* calls the fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures, which, unless a man believe, he is on the very verge of Atheism. Now, had the proposed declaration been brought forward in 1824, Mr. Stewart, as an honest man, could not have signed it. He might then have been cut off as a "rotten branch," and that very act of severity would, in all likelihood, have confirmed him in error. But see the happy consequence of kindness and moderation! He who might have continued an Arian, a Heretic, a Semi-Atheist, peculiarly dangerous on account of his talents, is now the zealous champion of orthodoxy, and one of the powerful enemies of Catholic error! What *has* been, *may* be. In two years, if you do not "lop us off," Mr. Porter, or myself, may be edifying the world with dissertations against our present opinions!

"But consider further, if you pass this declaration, you must extend it to probationers as well as ministers. Now, you tell the people that they have a right to choose their own pastors: but if they should not like a Calvinist, where are they to procure a teacher? I presume they must either submit to your dictation, or remain without a minister, which

would be rather a singular way of consulting their rights and privileges.

"Mr. Cooke and others have been pleased to denominate those who differ from them as "wolves in sheep's clothing." This implies that we assumed a false character. So far as I am concerned, I treat the insinuation with contempt. But I do admit, there are in this body "wolves in sheep's clothing:" men who have lived with us in Christian communion, who have pretended to entertain for us Christian friendship; but who now, when they are confident in numbers, turn upon us and would devour us. These are the *real* wolves.

"But we have also been compared to soldiers entering a garrison for its defence, and afterwards turning our arms against our companions. Surely Mr. Cooke intended this as a hit for himself and his partizans. I came into the garrison with the same colors which I now wear; I have always kept them flying, and whether I remain in it or be driven from it, I shall keep them aloft, so long as I have an arm to bear them. There are, however, traitors amongst us: men who came into the fortress on the avowed condition of mutual toleration and forbearance, and who engaged with us to defend it against the common enemy. But now, that they think *themselves* able to maintain the bulwarks, they treacherously turn their arms against their comrades, and would drive them out defenceless upon the world. These are the *real* traitors.

"Mr. Cooke's similes are only to be equalled by his charity. He has given us a new version of Christian unity. He has talked a great deal about unity of the Spirit, meaning unity of the Spirit's testimony. These are idle words which sound in the ear without conveying any idea to the mind. Every ignorant enthusiast, down to the lowest dregs of fanaticism, talks most presumptuously of the "testimony of the Spirit," and appeals to his own feelings as a proof that he is right. But when Mr. Cooke says that he is only to love those of his own creed, and to view those who differ from him as he would regard robbers, I tell him, that he is listening to the testimony of his own passions, not to the spirit of truth.—There were persons of old, who loved only their own tribe and nation, "who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others," but our Saviour showed that the poor Samaritan understood the nature of brotherly love infinitely better than the priest and the Levite. It may be said, this was only an act of charity to the body; but surely, if we

are bound to love that "which perisheth," we are much more constrained to love "that which endureth forever." It is one of the greatest evils of our unsanctified contentions, that they tend to restrict the charity of the gospel, which enjoins us to "love *all* men, and to do good unto *all* men," even that charity which the apostle declares to be superior even to faith and hope.

"I have not entered into any defence of my peculiar tenets, though I believe them to be capable of a rational and scriptural vindication, because I know that such a course would only widen a breach which is already too large. But I can assure you, that, whatever my opinions are, I hold them in great humility, under the most profound sense of my weakness and liability to go astray. In coming to the conclusions at which I have arrived, I can truly say, that I have sought light and direction where alone they are to be obtained. I have never read the Scriptures, with a view to ascertain their meaning, without first imploring the gracious assistance of the Divine Spirit to free me from prejudice, presumption and error, and to lead me to a right understanding of the truth. Neither have I ever sat down to write a sermon or any religious discourse, without praying to God that I might be enabled faithfully and truly to interpret his holy will, and to instruct his people. And I can further say, in perfect sincerity, that I never enter a pulpit without a profound sense of my responsibility; nor do I ever venture to address any people, until I have secretly and fervently intreated the protection and guidance of Heaven. I may not have asked with becoming humility and devotion and faith; but I trust I have asked in sincerity. And if I be yet in error, I believe God will enlighten my mind: if I be right, I trust he will grant me fortitude to maintain my integrity in despite of unmerited obloquy, and "to speak boldly the whole counsel of his will." For myself, and those who think with me, I feel, that I am entitled to claim at least the humble merit of being *sincere*. The world may consider us *fools* for not conforming to its maxims and pursuing its gains; but it would require the malignity of a demon to call us *knaves*. I believe, though many of my brethren be in error, that simple error is not a condemning sin; and I sincerely hope, that the great Shepherd may collect his sheep from many folds. If I thought that all who differ from me were to go down to destruction, I could not enjoy one hour's happiness.

"I conclude by entreating you not to enter upon a measure at variance with the true principles of your church, and which must eventually end in division and weakness. For myself, I have, as you all know, nothing either to hope or to fear. But, "for my friends and brethren's sake, I would say, Peace be within your Zion." Arianism has been persecuted, frequently unto blood, for fifteen centuries, which must prove that it cannot be subdued by mere human power. This, however, is certain, "if it be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot prevail against it."

Communicated for the Christian Messenger.

THE SPIRIT OF ORTHODOXY.

Having heard of great religious excitement among the Presbyterians, not long since I rode about six miles through the mud to one of their big meetings, with a hope of receiving some spiritual profit. But alas! how sadly was I disappointed! Shortly after I entered the house and took my seat, a preacher arose and gave out this as his subject: "Quench not the Spirit." He proceeded to investigate it, according to the following method: first, To show who the Spirit is; and second, What it is to quench the Spirit, &c.

He had no sooner divided his subject than I began to fear I should be disappointed in my expectation: nor had he proceeded far, till I was convinced of it. He adduced several arguments to prove that the Spirit is a distinct person in the Godhead, equal with the Father and Son, and yet the very God himself, beside whom there is no God! This to be sure, appears strange! For I cannot conceive how the terms, *the Spirit, the Spirit of God*, &c. which designate the third person in the trinity, as distinguished from the other two, should at the same time include under them, the terms *Father* and *Son*, to which they are opposed, and from which they are distinguished! Yet such is the fact, according to the doctrine of my preacher. For he will not surely allow, nor will any Trinitarian admit, that there is any God independent of the Father and Son. Then it follows of consequence, according to the Trinitarian hypothesis, that as the Spirit is the very God, the terms Father and Son are included under the phrase, "Holy Spirit"! And so it comes to pass, that the terms by which persons and things are distinguished from each other, do include each other, under the very terms, by which they are distinguished from, and opposed to each other! And thus

it also comes to pass that language ceases to be intelligible—ceases to be a vehicle of information. For if the term *Holy Spirit*, include the terms Father and Son; and the term *Father* include the terms "*Son*" and "*Holy Spirit;*" and the term "*Son*" include the terms *Father* and *Holy Spirit;* then the term Husband may include those of Wife and Child, &c.; and thus an end is put to all intelligible communication. But I hesitate not to say, that this construction of the terms Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is perfectly arbitrary and contrary to all analogy—to all correct rules of interpretation; and has been resorted to merely to support a tottering system. This will appear still more evident by attending a little to some of the arguments of our preacher. He argued the distinct personality of the Spirit from the fact, that it is said to be grieved, resisted, &c.; which he supposed could not be said of the Spirit unless it was God! Wonderful argument, truly! Let me see what I can prove, by a similar mode of reasoning. "God only can discern the thoughts and intents of the heart;" but the word of God is said to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart: therefore the word of God is God! My preacher, no doubt, would be able to detect the sophistry of my argument, and by so doing would detect the sophistry of his own; for they both proceed upon the same principles, the one being no more sophistry than the other. The word of God can only be said to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart *figuratively:* Nor can the Spirit be said to be grieved in any other sense.

But another argument of the Preacher.—"God spoke to the fathers by the prophets; but holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost: therefore the Holy Spirit is God." This argument, it is confidently believed, is equally sophistical with the other. It assumes this ground; that because the same things are sometimes ascribed to the Spirit that are to God; therefore the Spirit must be God. Let us then pursue this method of reasoning a little, and see to what it will lead us. "God alone is able to save us;" but faith is said to save us: therefore the Gospel is God! None but God can work miracles; but Paul wrought many, and notable miracles: therefore Paul was God! None but God can produce in us the new birth; but we are said to be born by the word of God: therefore the word of God, is God!

Such are the endless difficulties into which men run, in seeking to support a human system. But how will our

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Preacher get along with such portions of scripture as the following:—"No one knoweth the Father but the Son." Now surely if the Holy Spirit were equal to the Son or Father, he would also know the Father. "None knoweth of *that day* (meaning the day of the destruction of Jerusalem, or the day of Judgment) but the Father *only*." "He (God) hath shed forth this which ye see and hear." "I (God) will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." No person surely supposes that God, in sending his Spirit, sheds forth a self-existent person; or pours out a self-existent person! God is said not to have given the Spirit to his Son by measure: but I presume it may properly be said to be given to christians by measure. Now it would surely seem contrary to all our ideas of personality, to talk of measuring a person. The following passage of scripture, viewed through the medium of Trinitarianism, will show the absurdity of their system:—'God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost, who went about doing good." It will read thus: 'God the Father, the only true God, anointed Jesus, the only true God, with the Holy Ghost, the only true God, to qualify him to execute the work of redemption"!! 'In general throughout the Bible, the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the spirit of a person—just as we speak of the spirit of a man as the spirit of a person; and in the same manner as the sacred writers speak of the attributes of God; not as distinct Persons, but as something *of* a Person, or *in* a Person, or *belonging* to a Person. The Inspired writers speak of the spirit of man, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, the Wisdom of God, the Power of God, the Goodness of God, and the Will of God. We may also observe that when God speaks of the Spirit, he says, '*my Spirit*,' just as he says *my* Power, '*my* Goodness,' &c. These forms of speech naturally convey the idea that the Spirit of God is not a distinct Person, but the spirit of a Person." Bible News. P. 193.

It is a remarkable fact in relation to the Holy Spirit, that although Trinitarians universally represent him as an object of prayer and praise, and practise accordingly; yet there is *no evidence from the first of Genesis to the end of Revelation to warrant such a course.* But enough upon this point of controversy, which to me has become stale and insipid; and which I have long since wished to see die. Nor would I have written, even what I now have written upon the subject, but for the unhallowed efforts which are now making by the Demon of Partyism, by means of this controversy, to blast the reputation and destroy the influence of an humble, unassuming, unoffending people; and thus to establish his own diabolical dominion from sea to sea. But all these remarks by the way, are to show how easily our Preacher's arguments might be answered, and as introductory to the particular object of this communication.

Having gone through his arguments to prove the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit, our Preacher next proceeded to show us, what it is to 'quench the Spirit.' "They, said he, may be said to quench the Spirit, who deny his distinct personality. Such persons blaspheme the Holy Spirit: for the word blaspheme is derived from two words *blapto*, to blast, and *pheme*, the fame; they, therefore that deny his distinct personality, *blast the fame* of the Holy Spirit."!!

This is the substance of what he said. Awful charge! My feelings when he uttered it were indescribable; the sensations of pity, of sorrow and indignation, in quick succession passed through my mind. Gracious Heaven! thought I, will puny, fallible mortals, assume the throne of the Eternal, and dare to fix the black seal of unconditional and everlasting reprobation, upon those (to say the least of them) who are as conscientious, as humble and as holy in their hearts and lives as their accusers! Beneath this awful sentence a Newton and a Locke, a Watts, and a Whitley, and a host of worthies, the excellent of the earth, have fallen to endless ruin to rise no more; together with the thousands, who, in all ages of the Christian world, have believed the same doctrine in relation to the Holy Spirit:—Also the thousands who now embrace the same faith, are destined to the same ruin!—Dreadful condition, to be sure! Our case is desperate—is hopeless—if there be any virtue in the anathemas of Priests. For, as blasphemers against the Holy Spirit, we have never forgiveness in this world, nor the world to come! Should we even repent of our *blasphemies*, and embrace the trinity, it would all be in vain; for we have *never* forgiveness! Yet, I presume that if we would embrace the trinity, and propose joining our preacher's Church, he would accept us, and willingly receive somewhat at our hands, notwithstanding all our blasphemies against the Holy Spirit! But happy, thrice happy are you, O, ye multitudes, who, though ye have never believed the trinity, have washed your robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and are now before the throne of God, and worship him day and night in his temple.

where the anathemas of puny priests can never affect you! Yes, and we too may be happy, and rejoice that their sentences are not final: an appeal will be from their judgments, to the Supreme Court of the Universe, where we will have another hearing; and where *even our Judges will be Judged*. To *that Court* therefore we appeal; assured that there the decision in our case will be just: "for the Judge of all the earth will do right." My dearly beloved brethren, while you witness the mighty efforts of sectarians to put you down, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.—O! be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know, that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

TIMOTHY

REMARKS

ON THE PRECEDING COMMUNICATION.

Doctor Isaac Watts is named among others as denying the proper personality of the Holy Spirit. This is by many denied, who contend that he was a decided trinitarian. It is granted that he was a trinitarian in the former part of his life, but changed his views a few years before he died. This is confirmed beyond all doubt in a work, entitled. "*A faithful enquiry after the ancient and original doctrine of the Trinity, taught by Christ and his apostles.* By Isaac Watts D. D. 1745. London.

We will give a few extracts from this work on the personality of the Spirit.

"Though in our translation the word person be ascribed both to the *Father* and the *Son*, who (as we find in scripture) are proper persons, yet none pretend that this word is so expressly applied to the *Holy Spirit*, though he be represented often in a personal manner." p. 19.

"The best idea that we can find, which either the ancient or modern Jews have received concerning the Spirit of God, is that of a real, almighty, operative power, or principle of knowledge or action in the true Godhead; for I do not find that they ever agreed to carry their ideas so far as to make him a *real, distinct person* in the Deity.

"Now we can hardly doubt but that the general notion of the Spirit of God, or Holy Spirit, when Christ first came on earth, and which inspired Zechary and Elizabeth, Mary the mother of Christ, Simeon and Anna and John the Baptist, Luk 1 & 2 chap: in the beginning of the New Testament,

was the same notion or idea of the Spirit, which the Jews had received from all ages by their scriptures, and from their fathers by education and tradition." p. 27, 28.

"And indeed if the Holy Spirit were really a true and proper person, it would be as difficult to account for all these and many more expressions of scripture, which cannot be ascribed to a proper person; and if in some places these *impersonal expressions*, or in other places the *personal expressions*, must be figurative, why may not my explication of them do as well as the contrary? And thus the Spirit of God need NOT ANY WHERE BE CONSTRUED INTO A REAL, PROPER, DISTINCT PERSON." p. 30.

"But I know not any place of scripture which requires us to make express personal addresses, either of prayer or of praise, unto the Spirit, as we are taught to do to the Father and to the Son; nor can I find where we are required to fear him or adore him as God, or to trust in him, or so much as to follow after the knowledge of him; but for those benefits which we receive from him, we are directed by precepts and examples in scripture to address or pray to the Father, or the Son, Luk 11, 13, Rom. 15, 13. Joh. 15, 26, but not to the Spirit himself.

"Surely if praises or prayers were necessary to be offered distinctly to the Holy Spirit, 'tis very strange that of all the writers of the New Testament, not one of them should give us some hint of it in precept, instruction or example; but neither Matthew, Mark, Luke, nor John, Paul nor Peter, James nor Jude, have left us any thing whence we can infer it." p. 32, 33.

These are the sentiments of that eminent saint, whose hymns are sung by those very persons, who consign him and all who deny the personality of the Holy Spirit to endless torment!

We cannot forbear giving the reflections of a certain writer on a review of the book from which these extracts are taken. Xn. Dis: v. 2. p. 471.

"Nothing can be plainer than what is taught us from this example of Watts, and others similar to it; that the doctrine of the Trinity is a matter of words and phraseology alone.—The contention is not, on the part of its advocates, so much for a certain opinion, as for a certain form of language. He that adheres to this language, is accounted to be sound in the

faith; he that abandons this language, has departed from the faith. This is no random assertion, but a plain and demonstrable matter of fact; and it constitutes, in our view, one of the most deplorable features of the system. It is well known, that there is as little community of belief amongst those who contend for this creed, as between almost any classes of believers. The variety of interpretations given to these words, is almost endless. And yet every one who takes the words, in whatever sense, is considered and treated as a true believer; while every one who rejects these words, is, for that simple and single reason, considered and treated as a heretic. Dr. Watts was able to abide by the language in which he had been educated, and has been suffered quietly to retain his reputation and influence; while many others, not perhaps differing at all in sentiment from him, have yet been branded with obloquy, because they departed from the prescribed mode of speech. Such is trinitarianism: it is built upon, it consists in, words; and every man who will repeat the words, construe them as he may, is sound in this article of faith.

"This appears to us a most important view of the subject; for if it be thus—as every man of reading and observation must know that it is—it is an unsettled, loose, indefinite system, pretending to great exactness and precision, yet neglecting the sense in an unworthy adherence to words; and therefore we are fully justified in opposing all attempts to force it upon us and our fellow christians, and in repelling the imputations cast upon the character of those, who care more for the sentiment of their creed, than for the language in which it is stated.—Nay, we must be permitted to say, that we think the whole history of man does not afford a more lamentable instance of weakness, to say nothing harsher, than the pains which have been taken to overwhelm with suspicion and obloquy, all who cannot assent to the prescribed form of words; while at the same time, confidence and reputation are permitted to follow those who do, even when they accompany them with an heretical interpretation. The excellent Watts himself, if his strong attachment to old forms had suffered him to depart from the language as well as the sentiment in which he was educated, would have been proscribed in the church and his name blackened; but as he only departed from the sentiment, he has been still permitted to wear his honours."

THE EVILS OF PARTYISM.

We have long seen and lamented the evils which naturally grow in the prolific soil of partyism; but never have we so clearly seen them as at the present time. Every party has a set of dogmas or opinions peculiar to itself. These opinions must be maintained and defended at the expence of peace and christian feeling, if not of religion itself. Each party dwells upon its peculiar dogmas, and seems to place the very soul of religion in believing and enforcing them, and is ready to doubt every man's religion who denies them. Hard feelings are produced one towards another, friendship, fellowship and unity of spirit die, and division is confirmed.

Human nature is pretty uniform, and by attention to its exercises we are convinced of these facts. A preacher, professing to be specially called of God and sent to preach the gospel to every creature, ascends the pulpit. Forgeting his commission to preach the gospel to every creature, he gives vent to his boiling, angry passions against an unoffending unassuming people called *Christians*, calling them damnable heretics—on the road to hell—deceivers—hypocrites—blasphemers—who have committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, by denying that he is God supreme and the third person in Trinity, &c. When we hear the leaders of a party thus calumniating us, and find their congregations make no objection, we conclude that the priest and people are of one spirit, and that they are unanimous with respect to us. When we meet with a member of such a party, we feel no spirit for religious conversation with him; because it is immediately suggested to us, he views me a hypocrite, a deceiver, a bad man—he cannot therefore relish my conversation, nor have confidence in any thing I may say on this topic. This we believe to be the universal experience and effect of partyism. Let each one examine himself, and he will find it true.

And is this demon of partyism, fostered by the professed followers of the Lamb of God? What more foreign from the Spirit of God? Is such a religion a blessing to the world?—a religion that destroys the natural ties of friendship—that produces and stirs up passions—and says stand off I am holier than thou?—a religion that boasts "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these," pointing to its party?—a religion that elevates puny mortals to usurp the judgment seat of God, and from this high eminence to pass the judgment of condemnation on thousands

perhaps better than themselves, and sentence them to eternal perdition?—And indeed too many appear to be impatient that the sentence should be delayed.—The same spirit but a few centuries back labored to hurry the sentence into execution by fire and sword.

Can this be the meek and holy religion of heaven? Measure it by the standard, the Bible, it will appear infinitely distant. "Men grow furious only for error and absurdity. A concern for virtue has never shewn itself in deeds of violence; it has never made any inroads on the peace of society; it has never trampled on the rights of conscience, or wielded the sword of persecution; it may have wept in silence at the corruption and depravity of man; it may have prayed and toiled with earnestness to reclaim; but it has never burst forth into acts of hostility against even the most corrupt and depraved."

Would to God, all would study well 1 Cor. 13, and by this examine themselves, and labor for a confirmity to it. Dear brethren, who bear the name of Christ your master let us beware of the spirit so prevalent around us—let us not be too sensitive at the obloquy and reproach poured upon us. Nothing less, and nothing better need we expect from the spirit of partyism. We plainly see that the more the Lord prospers us, the more we are persecuted. Be patient. Trust in God; for the Lord reigneth. EDITOR.

From the Christian Register.

THE WALDENSES.

We extract the following interesting account of the Waldenses, from the November number of the Monthly Repository. Our readers will recollect; that it is a continuation of the journal of an English clergyman, who resided some weeks among them:—

"After the examination of his flock was concluded, I was invited by one of the worthy mountaineers of Rioclaretto to accompany him to his cabin, (*house* it could not be called,) where plain, but most abundant fare was provided for the pastor of Villa Secca. A baptism was here performed, and as he constantly kept in view the instruction of that part of his flock whom he was visiting, the pastor had no rest the whole day. At one time there was a pause in the conversation, and he seemed to be deeply thinking. "Thought travels far," said he, "and I was then thinking of the infamous conduct of Calvin towards Servetus," which he went on to

condemn in severe terms, and with animated eloquence. I remarked that the genuine spirit of Christian liberty was not more than partially understood by the Reformers, who, while they declaimed against the tyranny of the Church of Rome, were themselves on some occasions chargeable with persecution against those who differed from them. Socinus, for example, was instrumental in the persecution of Franciscus Davides, because he maintained that the Father was the sole object of the Christian's worship while Socinus insisted that Christ ought to be worshiped. "Socinus was evidently wrong every way," said M. Rostaing, "for every one has a right to the free possession of his own opion. And," turning to the worthy mountaineers around the fire, "besides, Jesus Christ is the Ambassador of God, and although, as such, I owe him all respect, and ought to receive his commands as being those of God, yet if I treat the Ambassador as if he were the King, I am wanting in my duty to the King himself." I was glad of this opportunity of ascertaining that the liberal sentiments and modes of interpretation I heard from the pastor of Villa Secca, were freely declared to his flock, and did not form merely an *esoteric* doctrine, to be divulged to those whose occupation led them to the critical study of the Scriptures." * * * * * *

"It was delightful to see on what affectionate terms M. Rostaing lives among his warm-hearted flock, and I was sorry when the words, "Adieu, Monsier la Pasteur; le Bon Dieu vous accompagne!" were returned with "Adieu, Ancien! Adieu, Diacre!" Adieu, Elder! Adieu, Deacon! (for titles are always carefully observed even amidst the eternal snows of the Alps,) and all sought their respective habitations. I returned in company with the pastor alone, to the inn at Clos, and our conversation was prolonged. I did not lead to it, but the conversation returned to the subject of the *person of Christ.* He observed, that our sentiments accorded upon the most essential points; and encouraged by the frankness of his manner, I took the liberty of asking him, whether he thought it *possible* that two beings or persons should, in the same sense of the term, be God: as it appeared to me that the strongest argument for the exclusive Deity of the Father was derivable from the nature and definition of Deity.—"Why," replied he, "what would be the consequence? Would it not be, that there would be *no God at all?* Either their opposing attributes and different wills must nullify one

another, so that we should have no Governor of Nature; or, if their wills and attributes were the same, and consequently coalesced, they would belong appropriately to *neither*, and neither of them would be God. I am clear of this. But," added he, "I have always found a difficulty in interpreting the beginning of John's Gospel." I remarked, that the Word being said to be *with God*, shewed that at least when he was said to be God, it was not intended that he was so in the same sense in which the Deity himself is so: and that when it was said "that all things were *made*," or *done*, "by him," the subject of John's Gospel being the Christian dispensation, and not the creation of the world, it was natural to interpret it of the former and not of the latter." "I am not clear," rejoined M. Rostaing, "respecting the meaning of the whole passage, but so far I think is certain: he who is *with* God, cannot be God himself, properly speaking; for if I have a person *with* me, and I send him away, 'me voila bien tot seul,' I am immediately left alone. The person who goes away and executes commands must surely be distinct from and inferior to him who remains and by whom the command was issued. And why is Christ even said to be *with* God at all, but because he derives honor from being near the Deity? Even when the *Kingdom* of the Mesiah is spoken of, it is as subordinate to the Father that he is represented as reigning. For David says, '*the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*' Psalm cx. 1. The monarch who places a person at his right hand, confers, indeed, the highest honor, but at the same time he makes known his superiority, and that he is the source from which honor proceeds. It is true on the other hand," continued M. Rostaing, "that our Saviour says, '*I and my Father are one.*' But is not the ambassador *one* with his prince, if he faithfully executes his designs; and is not to comply with the demands of the ambassador, to obey the king himself? This is evidently the meaning, for our Saviour says, in another place, 'Of myself I can do nothing,' and 'My Father is greater than I.'" I here observed to M. Rostaing that I was quite astonished to hear him express these sentiments, as I had thought the Vaudois all believed in the Supreme Deity of Christ, and that the religious books of instruction which they used contained this doctrine. He replied, "These questions are not agitated amongst us. '*Nous taisons*,' we forbear from discussing the co-equality of Christ with the Father, Original

Sin, Predestination," &c. "What! just as they do at Geneva?" replied I. "Yes." "But you have no regulation to that effect?" "No." "Does the Synod, then," I asked, "not interfere in *any* way in matters of faith, nor require the pastors to preach in any other manner than they may judge agreeable to the gospel?" "There is no interference at any time, on any matter of faith, either with the people or the pastors. Our creed is, as you must have observed, that of the apostles. But we requre no oath to be taken to it. Our pastors come to us already ordained at their respective colleges, and they have only to present certificates of this ordination, in order to receive cures as vacancies occur." "But surely," I said, "a great change in sentiments must have taken place among you within a few years?" "No," he replied, "no change of doctrine has *ever* taken place. The doctrines of our church at this day are those our ancestors received from the companions of the apostles." "Do they not then, in *some sense*, regard Jesus Christ to be God himself?" I inquired. "The Waldenses," he replied, "have ever considered charity, and not the belief of a particular set of doctrines, to be *Christianity*. They obey Christ and they worship God. But with respect to mysterious dogmas, no one interferes with the faith of our people. They go further, however, than the pastors go in their catechetical instructions, such as you have heard this morning. We use Osterwald's Catechism, which comes to us from Switzerland. We cannot print any thing for ourselves. This Catechism says of Christ that he was God and man. This the pastor explains, *de maniere de ne pas s' ecarter de l' orthodoxie*, in such a way as not to depart from orthodoxy. But that Christ should be equal to the Father never entered the head of a single Vaudois, *n' entrait jamais dans la tete d' aucun Vaudois*," pointing with his fore-finger to his own head with strong gesticulation. "But they all believe that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit descended upon him at his baptism."

A FRIENDLY DIALOGUE

Between two Elders of the Church of Christ.

James: I acknowledge, brother John, that I am an advocate for the ancient order of things, and verily think there is a great necessity of reform. I wish to have a friendly conference with you on several points, especially on the sub-

ject of the gospel ministry. On this point I desire you to state your views in as plain and brief manner as possible.

John: I am glad, brother, to hear you confess yourself an advocate for the ancient order of things; but I know not whether the order that pleases you is as ancient as that in the New Testament. We know an order existed in the first centuries after the apostles, not according to that in the New Testament, on the subject of the ministry, which order we connot receive; for we have abundant evidence that the church had at that early period erred from the truth in many particulars. My views on the subject of the gospel ministry you shall have in as plain and concise a manner as I can state them. It was the purpose of God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Therefore to fulfil this purpose, Christ ordained his apostles and sent them forth with this commission, "Go teach (disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Matt. 28. Mark 16. Three duties were especially enjoined on them. 1st. To disciple, or make disciples of all nations by preaching the gospel to every creature—2'ly. To baptize them when they believed. 3'ly. To teach them all the precepts of Jesus.—These apostles were divinely authorized to ordain others to aid them in these works, as Timothy, Titus, Philip, &c.—These, ordained by the apostles were also divinely authorized to ordain other faithful men to the same works. These ordained by Timothy, Titus, &c. were doubtless authorized to ordain others, (for we read not of the order being changed,) and this to continue to the end of the world. These are briefly my views of the gospel ministry.

James: You believe then that gospel preachers of the present day act under the commission given to the apostles.

John: I do. For if they do not I know of no other commission of divine authority—of no other dispensation.

James: If preachers of the present day act under the commission of the apostles, I cannot see the propriety of their being called Bishops or Overseers; for these are stationary, and confined to one or two congregations, whereas the apostles were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

John: With equal propriety they may be called Bishops,

as the apostles were. For when they were about to ordain another Apostle in the place of Judas, Peter to prove the propriety of it, quotes the Psalmist, "*His bishopric* let another take. Acts 1, 20. Peter had just before said, that Judas was numbered with them and took part of this ministry. If Judas was a bishop then, they all were; for the ministry was the same.

James: The Lord promised to be with them to the end of the world. By this I understand that with the apostles he promised to be alway, to the end of the Jewish dispensation or temple worship, which took place at the destruction of the temple by Titus. This promise belonged to them exclusively, that the lord would be with them to aid them in the work to which he had sent them. For it is said "They went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." Mark 16, ult.

John: If *to the end of the world* means the end of the temple worship, which ceased at the destruction of the temple by Titus; it follows that the promise was not fulfiled, because it is believed that the apostles were all dead before that event took place. John might be excepted. And if the promise is to be with them exclusively how can the end of the world mean the end of the gospel dispensation, which will not take place till the end of time, when the apostles shall have been dead many centuries before? The promise to be with them I cannot therefore limit to the apostles, but consider it equally good to all those, who by divine authority have succeeded them. If modern preachers have no claim to the promise that the Lord will be with them, they have a cheerless work to perform.

James: If modern preachers act under the same commission given to the apostles, and under the same promise, may they not expect the same divine aid to enable them to work miracles, and to make laws for the church?

John: As to law-making the Apostles had no commission, no authority. They were instructed to teach all things the Lord had commanded them, and nothing more. As to the miracles the Apostles were enabled to perform, the Lord did not promise that he would be with them always to the end of the world to enable them to perform miracles; these we know the apostles were enabled to do, and should be enabled as long as miracles were deemed necessary for the promotion

of his cause. And should the Lord ever see it necessary still that miracles should be wrought for the promotion of his cause, these gifts will be restored to the church. We have no reason to dispute this being done; and indeed the situation of the world seems to demand it. For every sect claims to act under the apostolic commission, and to have the same promise that the Lord will be with them; yet they all preach a different gospel. The world is in doubt who are right and who are wrong; they know not what to do. If they unite with any one sect they have to disunite with others, and thus act in direct opposition to the divine command, "Let there be no divisions among you." Should the Lord mercifully restore to his true ministers the gift of miracles, this doubt would be removed and the world be established in the truth. One such preacher in a heathen or in a christian land would convert more to the truth, than all the missionaries, Bible societies and theological schools on earth together. The work of the Lord would spread as in Apostolic times. But we are not yet prepared for the reception of this gift; because for certuries the world has been taught that it had ceased, and that it was no longer to be expected; that the gospel was already confirmed by it in the days of the apostles and therefore there was no longer a necessity for it *now*. By what authority the world has been thus taught, I cannot learn. The bible is silent on this subject. This teaching has filled the world with unbelief, and the Lord has promised these gifts to them only that believe—"These signs shall follow them that believe," &c. Mark 16. Unless we believe, can we reasonably expect the fulfilment of the promise? James said "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up," &c. Js. 5. 14, 15. Must we confine this to apostolic times? If so; why not confine all the instructions of this apostle in immediate connexion to the same times? If one be not binding on us, why are the others? Who shall presume to say which shall be observed by us, and which not? This we think, equally applies to all the instructions of Christ and his apostles, unless in the particular cases, were the context forbids.

James: Indeed you astonish and confound me! Where has been the Church of Christ for so many centuries?

John: In the wilderness, and in *mystery Babylon.* The "two witnesses have been for many centuries prophesying in sackcloth,"—a symbol of deep sorrow for *the apostacy* of the church from the simplicity of Christ, and for the world refusing to hear, and obey the truth.

James: Have there been no true gospel ministers then for so many centuries past?

John: Yes; we believe every age has produced such; for the two witnesses have prophesyed during the dark reign of "the man of sin."—Yet they shall rise and prevail and do wonders, even to cause fire to come down out of heaven.—But why the gift of miracles had ceased during that period, we are unable to say.

James: Can we possibly ascertain who are the true ministers of God in the present day, seeing none have the gift of miracles? All the preachers of the various discordant sects claim to be God's ministers, sent to preach his gospel. This we cannot possibly believe to be fact; else we must think that God sends men to preach different gospels.

John: I know of no better criterion by which to judge in this case than that given by Jesus Christ Matt. 7, 15. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits," &c. This is a safer way to determine than by miracles; for our Lord adds "Many will say in that day, have we not prophesyed in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works"—who shall yet be rejected.—Look at the great Teacher from heaven, as the perfect model of a gospel preacher. He wept over a ruined world—he taught—he reproved, he warned, he intreated, he prayed for his enemies—Do you see one professing to stand in his stead? Does he manifest the same spirit? Or do you hear him in the spirit of a demon, railing against his poor fellow creatures, not for wickedness, but because they cannot believe and receive his peculiar *dogmas*? Is this man a minister of the Lold Jesus? We cannot acknowledge him, though he bear the sacred name, *Christian.*

James: Your ideas have seriously affected my mind, and shall be the subject of future examination.

John: I would wish to leave a few queries on your mind for future examination also. If modern preachers act not under the apostles' commission, whence do you derive your authority to preach, to baptize and to teach?—Should you

say, From the eldership; the question follows, whence did they derive their authority to do the same works, and to commit this authority to you? Should you say, you received your authority from the Church, the question then occurs, where is the church authorized to grant this power?

James: Truth is my object; and whereever I find it, I will receive it, nor shall persecution nor death sever me from it.

John: With such a spirit God it well pleased. Farewell, my brother. EDITOR.

REVIVALS.

FAYETTE COUNTY, Ky. March 7, 1828.

BRO: STONE,—It is with great pleasure I take up my pen to inform you, and the lovers of the Saviour, of the glorious spread of truth, and that *faith*, that purifies the heart, and works by love, in some parts of our county. Near the close of the last year, I visited Paris, and found many anxious to hear, judge, believe, and obey for themselves. Bro: GANO had been successfully laboring there for some time previous. The attention of the people increased; and application was soon made for the organization of a church in that place, having no name but that of *Christian*, and no rule of *faith* and *practice*, but the Bible. Accordingly, I attended in Paris, on the 8th of January, and assisted in planting a church composed of eight *Believers*. Since which time, however, there has been considerable additions made, and the number belonging to the society, at this time, is thirty-four. (Since it has increased to fifty-one. March 23.)

Bro: Gano and myself have labored the principal part of our time, in that place, during the present year; and thank God, I have reason to believe, that our labor has not been in vain. Other preaching brethren have occasionally, visited there, whose services have been very acceptable.

On the 4th Lord's day of February, we had a communion. The meeting commenced on the Friday before, and continued (with some intermission) until Wednesday morning following. The Court-House was generally full to overflowing; and the attention of the people evinced their deep solicitude to know the truth, as it is in Jesus; and the crowds of weeping mourners, who came forward to unite with us in prayer, at every invitation, evinced to all, that the word of God was quick and powerful. I immersed eighteen during the meeting, and many others are desirous to submit to the same

command. The preaching brethren who attended, appeared much engaged, and spoke to great effect. The prospects are, indeed, cheering in Paris. Persecution rages to a great extent, but I humbly trust it will have a salutary tendency and incline the lovers of Jesus to trust in him, who is able to save.

The *cause* is yet advancing at Antioch. Six have recently united with us at that place—crowds attend our meetings—sinners are weeping throughout the congregation, and many appear to be inquiring after Him of whom Moses in the *law* and the prophets did write.

I also have great pleasure in saying that the Lord's work is progressing at, and in the vicinity of Union Meeting-House. A number have recently professed *faith* in the Son of God, and joined the church. Last night, we had an unusually solemn meeting. Six of the young people, who believed in their heart, confessed their dear Redeemer, and united with us. Many more appear on the borders of Zion, and I trust, will soon engage in the life of holiness. I could be more particular, but for the sake of brevity shall close.

I make this communication that our brethren in *distant lands*, may know what is passing in our country, and desire that, like Paul when he met his brethren at the three taverns, they will thank God and take courage.

THOS. M. ALLEN.

Extract of a Letter from Elder D. Long to the Editor, dated March 13th, 1828. MECHANICSBURGH, Ohio.

"BRO: STONE,—I arrived at home last night from a tour of preaching of four months. I feel well compensated for all my toil and trouble. I found the cause of God advancing, and human creeds and parties falling. I visited Elder E. Paramer, in Smithfield, Ohio. The reformation was still spreading there, and sectarianism yielding to gospel light. Since May last he has baptized one hundred and thirty, all living in church order and peace. He has appointed a camp meeting near Smithfield, to commence the last Friday in August next, and solicits the aid of Elders from a distance."

At a four days meeting at the Republican near Lexington, which meeting closed the 7th inst., the Lord was evidently present. The assembly were solemn and much affected. Twelve were baptized, and about ten more were joined to the church. Many more are anxiously seeking the Lord!

We are glad to announce to the world the low esteem in which confessions of faith are held by the different sects of the present day. Those books appear like a ball descending a hill, whose motion is accelerated in its progress. Soon they must roll from the view and notice of the christian world. In our next number will be given a pleasing account of the fate of human creeds in Ireland among the Presbyterians. We rejoice to see the triumph of truth in our own country. But a little while ago, as we are credibly informed, a Presbyterian preacher of high eminence, not fifty miles from this place, publicly informed his congreation, that none but the preachers and officers of the church were required to receive their Confession of Faith—the common people were not required to receive it. Yet this same preacher informed an inquirer afterwards privately that the common people, if accused of malconduct or heresy should be tried by the Confession—a book they had never received, nor had been required to receive! This book was at first solemnly bound on the people with an oath—afterwards the oath was dispensed with, and they were only required to receive it—*now* even this is not required of them. Soon it will entirely lose its authority and be cast to the moles and to the bats, those creatures of darkness. One of the Populars in the Baptist church in the neighborhood of Lexington, not long since publickly exposed their Confession as well as the Westminister confession, to the ridicule of the assembly, and sneeringly rejected them. Success attend their labors!—We attach no blame to these preachers for acting thus, unless it be deemed improper to judge a person by laws which had never been given him, and to which they had never been required to submit.

EDITOR.

Bro: Stone,—Not long since, a very popular divine of the Presbyterian sect, in speaking publickly of the great utility of Bible Societies, observed, "that he was awfully afraid that there were vast numbers that would die and be damned, who might be saved if they had the word of the Lord, and the means of grace afforded them." Without stoping to call in question the truth of the above remark, I only inquire, how it will accord with the Confession of *faith*, to which that gentleman has subscribed?—a part of which reads as follows: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated

unto everlasting life, and others foreordained unto everlasting death." "These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and *unchangeably designed*; and their *number is so certain and definite*, that it *cannot* be either increased or diminished."!!—Con. of *faith*, ch. 3, vs. 3–4. Now, Bro: Stone, can you reconcile this man's *faith*, with his *declaration?* Does he believe the number of the *elect*, and reprobate, to be so definite, that neither can be added to, or diminished from; and yet will he affirm that he believes many now to be in hell! who might have been in heaven, if they had only possessed a Bible? Is it not a palpable contradiction, and one of those inconsistencies that ought to be held up to public execration? Either this gentleman in common with his brethren generally, have rejected the old Confession, or they pay no respect to it, and act a very inconsistent part. Are they not now engaged in preaching the very doctrines, and pursuing much the same course that R. Marshall, yourself, and others did, some twenty-six or seven years ago? and for which you were spurned from their presence, and denominated *heretics* and *infidels?* But I am wandering too far. I want you, if you can, to reconcile this *divine's* belief, and sayings; for I am free to declare I cannot see any agreement between them. For the benefit of myself and others, do, if you can, satisfy

An Enquirer.

REPLY.

Dear Sir,—You require of us a hard task, nothing less than to reconcile contradictions. From this work we have long ago ceased, and have left it with those who are fonder of the jargon of the schools, than of the simplicity of the Bible. Perhaps you may derive some aid from a note of a correspondent, handed us a short time ago. We will subjoin it for your inspection.

"Bro: Stone,—Not long since I was in company with a number of persons at a friend's house in the neighborhood of Lexington, where a gentleman of the *Secession* visited me, and wished to have some religious conversation with me. Among other things he stated that he had lately had a conversation with a Presbyterian preacher, who informed him that almost all the converts lately taken into the Presbyterian church were Arminians. What, said the Seceder, will you do with those converts when you shall preach to them the

pure doctrines of the gospel—the doctrines of the Confession of Faith? The preacher replied, we intend to bring them on by degrees."

T———.

"Every christian must be deeply solicitous to form just apprehensions of the character of Jesus; neither to ascribe to him attributes which he would himself have disclaimed; nor to derogate from that transcendant dignity, which belongs to him. We acknowledge with the great apostle, that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God."

☞ My Agents and Patrons, it is hoped, will exert themselves to collect and send me the ballance of money for the first volume. They will recollect that the money for the second volume is now due. My printer and paper maker cannot work without wages. For the past favors of my agents they have my sincere thanks. Some money sent by mail has been lost, yet if private conveyances cannot be had, let them send by mail. The loss is mine. EDITOR.

☞ Post Masters will please to return immediately to the Post Office, Georgetown, Ky. all the Nos. of the Christian Messenger not taken by subscribers out of their offices.

EDITOR.

☞ *To the Publishers of Papers and Periodical Works, throughout the United States.*—It is intended before, or certainly by the 1st of May next, in a pamphlet with other statistical matters, to notice all the Newspapers and Periodicals in the United States, and the city or town where published, &c. A copy containing the above shall be faithfully forwarded to each of you who will insert this notice once and forward a copy of the work you publish to Philadelphia, directed to "THE TRAVELLER."

Philadelphia, Feb. 22.

☞ THE "CHRISTIAN MESSENGER" is published monthly, at the "*American Sentinel*" office, Georgetown, Ky. at ONE DOLLAR a year, or for twelve numbers. Any one, obtaining ten subscribers, and will collect and send the money, shall have one volume *gratis*.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY BARTON W. STONE,

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

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

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THE SPIRIT OF ORTHODOXY.

No. II.

This is a time of great religious excitement: and with it rages the spirit of partyism, to an alarming extent. Never probably, have we seen, in our country, such vigorous efforts made and making, as at present, to support clerical domination; and to put down all persons and things that stand opposed to its reign.

The most of the various sects seem willing, for the time being, to make friends; and unite their *mighty forces* and *mighty energies* against the sons of *religious liberty*, and the cause of *religious freedom*. The odds indeed is fearful, in favor of ecclesiastical tyranny. But the war between the parties is declared, and the battle is begun. Behold, the armies in the field!

On the one hand you see an almost innumerable host of veterans, and new recruits, who have been trained in the schools of sectarianism; and are panoplied with learning—with eloquence—with great moral influence—with Creeds and Confessions of Faith—with the authority of great names—of Councils and of the Church; and are spurred on to mighty exertion by interest and the love of Power. On the other hand you see a mere handful—a stripling band, with comparatively but little of the wisdom of this world—but little eloquence—but little moral influence—with no human Creeds—the authority of no popular Church, and no popular names to plead in behalf of their cause; nor have they any earthly interests to stimulate them to action. There is a mighty name, however, which they claim, which to them outweighs all their names, and all other considerations; and that is, the *name of Jesus*. There is also an interest, which, to them, is a thousand times dearer than all others; and that is, the eternal salvation of their souls, and the progress of Gospel truth.