At this place (Jacksonville) the church is encouraged and revived. Two have within a few days been immersed, and several have united by letter. Our congregations are large, attentive and feeling. Our house of worship is too small to contain them. We have a brick house going up, but unfinished. On 3d Lord's day 7 were added; on Wednesday night following 5 more; on Friday night following 4; on Sunday night following, 5 more.

Brother Gabriel R. Young of Greencastle, Ia. Jan. 18, 1836 writes that the truth is gaining ground, in faith and practice in that section, and additions to the church are made.

Brother J. T. Johnson of Georgetown Ky. writes Jan. 14, that old Bethel is revived. An addition of 5 persons was made one meeting. Lord! grant them a hundred fold.

RECEIPTS SINCE LAST VOLUME.

KENTUCKY.—NEW CASTLE, H. Middleton; J. S. Owns; Jo. W. Shannon; Geo. Shortridge; E. M'Neal; A. Beasley; Doc. Gosman; Mrs. Herndon—all for volume 10; L. L. Jenkins 9, 10; G. Shivel 9 10; Jo. Shannon 9, 10; the two last Shivel and Shannon paid Richard White for vol. 9—not yet received by me.

OHIO.—HILLSBORO, Eliza Gibson vols. 9, 10. CUMMINGSVILLE, Mrs. Mc Maken 9, to brother Johnson. CARTHAGE, Js. McCash 9, 10; Mrs. Sparks 9; B. W. Watkins 10; J. Bruin 10, not 9; Brother Barnett 9; M. Jessap 10; Elder George Fisher 10.

ILLINOIS.—JACKSONVILLE, J. Hooker 10; J. Abraham 9; N. Fisk 9; Chs. Talliafero 9. LEWISTOWN, Robt. Hughs 10; J. Scott, J. M. Hartford, T. Bonney, H. Boughman, J. Laswell—all for 9. ROCHESTER, S. Williams for Thos. Baker, for part of 9, 42 cents; J. Stokes 1 25; R. Bell 1 25 for 9; Js. Parker 1 25 for ½ of 9, and ½ of 10; Js. Poor 62½ cents. MOUNT STERLING, L. Brockman 9. CARROLLTON, N. P. Rampy $10 00. MONTEZUMA, J. F. Long for Js. Johnson 1 25; Thos. Tucker 1 25; Sam. Johnson 1 25; N. Coffee 1 25—all for 9. CARTHAGE, Josh. Owens 3 vols. of 10, (1 00 before pd. by P. M.) John Box, John O. Smith, both for 10. MACKINAW, Wm. Samuell 10. CLEARY'S GROVE, Wm. White and Miles Hamilton 9; and Js. Simpson for 10. HOLLAND'S GROVE, R. B. McCorcle for vol. 9.

TENNESSEE.—MT. PLEASANT, A. Crawford 2 00 for vol. 10; Doc. Buscoe Brother Gooch, Tho. Wortham,—all for 10. COLUMBIA, R. Mack for self, J. Mack and Wm. Mack; R. Wortham, Eld. E. Osborn for 10. MONROE, Wm. Wray 5.00!

MISSOURI.—CLARKSVILLE, J. McCowsky 6, 8, 9. FARMINGTON, J. Samuel paid 15.00 for 9, lost by mail.

VIRGINIA. STRASBURGH, David Stickley, 8, 9; Jac. Litzer, J. Darner, Mary Craig,—all for 10.

ALABAMA. MONTGOMERY, Eld. Js. Davis and J. V. Davis, 5.00 for 10. BARTONS, Eld. Js. Matthews 20.8 for 9 and 10. WATERLOO, L. D. Collins for self 1.25; A. Parker, 1.25; R. Johnson 1.25; W. Welch 1.25; Eld. A Kindrick paid 1 00. to agent, all for vol. 9.

MARYLAND—LITTLE GUNPOWDER, Ben. Osborn for J. Taylor 1.25; J. Woodland 1.25; Watkins, 1.00. Ford 1.00 and for self 25 cts. for 9.—5.00 before sent, but lost by mail.

☞ For want of room some of the Receipts have been omitted.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY B. W. STONE:

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."—PAUL

VOL. X.] JACKSONVILLE, ILLINOIS, FEBRUARY, 1836. [No. 2

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,

Is published monthly, in Jacksonville, Illinois, at ONE DOLLAR a year, or for twelve numbers, if paid on the reception of the second number—or ONE DOLLAR AND TWENTY-FIVE cts. if not paid within six months. Persons procuring eight subscribers, and remitting the money to the editor, shall have one volume for their trouble. The postage to be paid by the subscribers. The postage is 12½ cents a year at any distance in the United States.

Why, how, and when should Christians of all names and parties be united in one body?

THESE queries are of immense importance to the christian community, and to the world. They justly claim the attention of all, and I am truly glad that many of all orders are now enlisted in the good cause, and advocate the union of christians. There are a few things which have stood, and are still standing in the way, as huge mountains, forbidding a passage, and threatening ruin to those christian heroes who would dare attempt to scale them. These proud citadels can be taken, and must be taken and demolished before that union for which we plead can be effected. 'With God all things are possible.' Fighting under his banner, and obeying his orders, a few can put ten thousand to flight, and discomfit all the armies of the aliens, leagued with the powers of hell.

In order to encourage all the friends of christian union, and to enlist more in the noble cause, I will attend to the queries at the head of this article.

1. Why should christians of all names and parties unite in one body? To this I answer:

1st. Because it is the will of our Lord and Savior. This will is expressed unequivocally in John 17, 20, 21. 'Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also who shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.'

Rom. 12, 4, 5. The inspired Paul wrote the same sentiment.—'For as we have many members in one body, and all the members

have not the same office: so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.'

1 Cor. 1, 10. 'Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.'

1 Cor. 12, 12, 13. 'For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ; for by (*en—Greek, in*) one spirit ye have all been baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit. That there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member honored all the members rejoice with it.'

Gal. 3, 28, 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.'

Eph. 4, 3, 4, 5, 6, 'Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one, Lord one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.'

Phil. 1, 27, 'Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.' Chap. 2, 2, 'Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.'

1 Pet. 3, 8, 'Finally, be ye all of one mind.' I might multiply similar quotations from the apostles and prophets, and even from the law of Moses, to confirm the position, that it is the will of our Lord and Savior that all that name the name of Christ should be one. I could prove from the history of the primitive church that it is practicable; for it is recorded of them that they were all of one heart and of one soul. But the authority adduced is deemed sufficient to convince all, who do not close their eyes against the light.

If then it is the will of God that all Christians be one—who dare resist his will, and not sink into it? If division or schism of Christians be in opposition to his will (and that it is who can deny, when he so expressly forbids and frowns upon it by his Spirit?) who dare plead for it? Who dare support, countenance, and establish it? Who dare abide in it? Is it not disobedience? Yea more, is it not rebellion against our King, his laws and his government? Is it not in fact a plea set up by every party and sect of christians against the prayer of Jesus? All applaud the prayer of the Savior, and all repeat it in their prayers; but with this understanding, that all should flow to them and join their body!—If the union of christians is designed to be the conversion of the world, do not divisions stand as an impassable gulph between the world and salvation? Who can deny this with the bible before him? Who does not see that this division is *now* the fruitful soil in which infidelity, atheism and scepticism are exuberantly springing up and filling the world, and peopling the regions of hell? Who does not see that division is chilling the heart's blood of religion, weakening our energies and strengthening the bands of wickedness? It is the laugh of infidels, the joy of devils, the grief of heaven and the ruin of the world. And yet will christians plead for it? Will they cling to it with a deathly grasp? Will they continue in it with stubborn pride? God forbid.

2. A second reason why christians should unite, is, because it is the design of God, by their union and joint co-operation, to conquer and save the world. 'A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, a house divided against itself is brought to desolation.' If the kingdom of God be divided against itself, how can it stand? Do not the divisions now existing in the church or kingdom of Christ tend to its overthrow—to its ruin? No intelligent man will deny it. Why then oppose christian union? Rather why support sectarism, that mighty engine for pulling down, and demolishing the church of Christ?—He that knows his master's will and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, says the Savior. But reader, do you not know that his will is that christions be united? And are you not resisting his will in not submitting to it, or in still supporting sectarism? 'To him that knoweth to do well and doeth it not to him it is sin,' says James the apostle. Let none in this enlightened day think himself guiltless in not flowing together and uniting together as one body.

Suppose a vast army of foreigners invade our country. All America agrees they must be repelled, but are divided with regard to the proper way. But Congress have devised and published to the states the proper and only right way, and urge all speedily to adopt their measures and act promptly up to them. The different states dissapprove of the measures of the general government,—one prefers this, and another that way. The whole country is divided into factions and parties, each party determined to pursue its own course,—and what is worse, each party is angry at the other, for opposing its peculiar measures, and all view each other as enemies, and instead of turning all their forces against the common enemy, they engage with mortal hate to destroy each other. Can such a kingdom, or government stand? Is not such a course rebellion against the government? Are such rebels guiltless? The application to the divided state of the christian world, is easy. Our King has issued his orders that all his followers unite in one body, against our common enemy. But the factions or parties refuse. Would not such recreants be punished in a well disciplined army? The answer of all is one.

You preachers of righteousness, who exercise the 'ministry of reconciliation,' much, very much depends on you. Yield to the orders of your King yourselves, and labor to preach 'the righteousness of union with all christians, whatever may be the sacrifice. Do not

think of receiving the plaudit of your Lord at his coming, when you present your poor little party to him on that day. Take heed lest all your works on his temple be burnd up, and you yourselves with them. The Lord has said, if ye die in your sins, where God is, you cannot come: and what can be sin if disobedience to the King's orders is not?

You, fathers and mothers in Israel, obey the Lord and teach your children obedience. Let your last days be devoted to the good cause of christian union, die in the obedience enjoined, die recommending it with your last breath. If you die in this sin, death cannot wash it away, purgatory cannot purge it. What can do it? 'As the tree falls so it shall be.'

You, young christians, obey your King. Follow not in the steps of error,—unite, flow together in love, in one body, in one spirit. To you we look, as those by whose unity the world shall believe. You are the church's hope. You are to fill the places of us your fathers, who will shortly leave you, and lie buried in the silent grave. O may our happy spirits behold your glory—and rejoice in seeing the world bowing to Jesus through your unity!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

EDITOR.

ILLINOIS, TAZEWELL COUNTY, Jan. 8th, 1836.

BROTHER STONE,—

Being informed by the last number of the Christian Messenger, that my former communication to you was lost, and feeling a great desire to hear your remarks on its contents, I have concluded to write to you again on the same subject, viz. that of being born again, born of water and spirit, etc. Some four or five years ago I heard our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus publicly explained, as having reference to baptism exclusively. I rather implicitly, and without much investigation received the idea for awhile. The next thing however that caught my attention on the subject, was that it seemed to be growing into the cold, and uncharitable belief, that no person but the immersed, could receive the remission, the holy Spirit; that could see or enter into the kingdom of heaven. This was so foreign from my feelings and former views, that I commenced an examination of the doctrine of the second birth. The result was, that some objections have occurred to my mind, which I have not been able to reconcile with the idea that Christ had any reference to immersion in his conversation with Nicodemus. These objections I will now endeavor to lay before you.

Objection 1st. Our Lord was not treating on the subject of baptism, but of being born again. Not one word is used which can have any reference to immersion but the word water. The same word is

very often used, both in the old and new Testament as pointedly as it is in John 3 and 5, which certainly can have no reference to immersion. I will cite a few of them. 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.' Jesus says, 'If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink.' The prophet speaks of drawing water out of the wells of salvation.

Objection 2nd. To say that Christ had reference to immersion in the above named conversation, in my humble opinion cannot be proved by scripture; and has its foundation merely in inference.

Obj. 3d. It cannot be proved from the new Testament that Christ or his disciples ever taught the christian baptism until after the resurrection.

Obj. 4th. The doctrine of baptism and the second birth are no where associated together as being synonymous. Peter speaks of being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. John says, 'beloved let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God.' Now brother Stone you and I profess to have loved God prior to our baptism; and if being born again, and born of God means baptism, we must have been mistaken, for we could not love God, or know God, until we were baptized.

Obj. 5th. Our Lord says, 'except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.' He cannot perceive, behold or discover the kingdom of heaven, (for this must be the meaning of the word *see.*) Of course his baptism must have been done in blindness, and unbelief. Some tell us that the word see in St. John 8 and 3, means to possess or enjoy. Should this be the fact, then it follows that no person has possessed, or enjoyed the kingdom of heaevn until they were baptized.

To avoid these difficulties, some make a distinction between being born again and born of water and spirit. But to me it appears evident that there are but two births spoken of, viz, a natural and spiritual. Christ in explaining the subject says, 'that which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit.' No other birth is spoken of than the natural and spiritual. If to be born of water and spirit is baptism, no person has ever entered the kingdom of heaven but the immersed. I suppose the kingdom of heaven means the reign of Jesus in the gospel. Do, brother Stone, show me what are the means designed to be employed in the salvation of a soul out of the reign of Jesus in the gospel, or out of the kingdom of heaven. Is that soul who has believed in Jesus with all his heart, who is reconciled to God, and his government, who brings forth good fruit, who when he saw Jesus anhungered, fed him, when thirsty, gave him drink, when sick and in prison, visited

him; is such a person as this in the reign of Jesus in the gospel, or not, though honestly ignorant of his duty as it respects baptism?—Does Christ reign over the immersed believer in the gospel, and over the unimmersed believer out of the gospel? Or is the above described person lost forever, merely because he could not see his duty as it respects immersion, and honestly thought he complied with the same? This doctrine has its parallel only in the dark shades of Calvinism.

Again, suppose the sinner believes with all his heart to righteousness, repents and turns away from all his sins, nothing lacking on his part but baptism, he sends for an administrator, but he comes too late; some fatal disease has hurried him out of the world. If the priest had have come a few moments sooner he would have been saved; but he is lost forever, not because he had no will to obey, but because it was out of his power. You may think this is going to an extreme. I know that it is far from your sentiment, but I think it is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of some, and I do not know but it agrees with the idea of baptism being the new birth. If immersion is the second birth, may we not understand our Lord in this way? That which is immersed of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is immersed of the spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you ye must be immersed again.

Perhaps it may be said that immersion is the only means by which the second birth is effected. I would ask whether it can be effected without baptism? If not, then it follows of course that we cannot come into spiritual life and existence, or into the kingdom of heaven without it. How then can we expect eternal life or salvation without it?

I will now offer some of my views on the subject of being born again. We must acknowledge that there are figurative expressions used both in the Old and New Testament. Amongst these I place the new birth. The spiritual birth is compared to the natural birth. Paul likewise speaks of a begetting through the gospel. This must take place prior to the new birth. It must be something similar to the good seed sown which has not as yet brought forth fruit. Now before the begotten, unborn soul there are two things, viz, a belief unto righteousness, and acts of obedience. Can we expect acts of obedience from an embryo, or one that is unborn? Or shall we not first expect that belief which is unto righteousness, which brings the soul into life and activity? Before, it could not act because it was not born; it had not moral power; because it had not that faith which is of the heart, or that belief which is unto righteousness. Now it is born by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. To me it appears that to be born of water is to be born by the word, or by the gospel with its blessings. Jesus says, the water I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to eternal life. John speaks of the water of life. Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely. Isa. 44, 3. I will pour water on him that is thirsty, etc. There must be some distinction between being born of water and spirit, or else the Savior must have used tautology in his conversation with Nicodemus. Jesus says, the words that I speak unto you are spirit and life. Yet it is evident that Paul holds forth the idea of receiving the spirit by the hearing of faith. There must be some distinction between the promise and the thing promised. I know of but one great change, in passing from darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, which to me appears to be represented by the following scriptures. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins. Being born again, etc. Now do these scriptures all allude to the same thing? And is that baptism? If so, the great evidence of passing from death unto life, would be baptism; but John says it is love to the brethren. There are some passages of scripture which induce me to believe that being born again or born of God, and the faith of the heart, allude to the same thing. Peter speaks of being born again by the word of God. We know that the second birth cannot be effected without faith in God's word. John says whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Here we learn that it is our faith that overcometh the world. Again, who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God? John says, he that hath the Son, hath life. Can we have the Son or life without a birth? Or can we expect eternal life without being born again? By the word *born*, do we not understand the act of coming into life? If so, where is the scripture proof that immersion produces life? Does not faith in the word of God produce life? He that believeth on the Son hath life everlasting. Even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him, might not perish, but have eternal life. He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. To whom shall we go but unto thee, thou hast the words of eternal life. To multiply more proof would be useless; but be it always remembered that the scripture faith is that of the heart; unto righteousness, or obedience. Is the faith of the heart, in a penitent believer, prior to immersion, a dead faith? Are we to understand James 2, 18 as alluding to a penitent believer about to enter the kingdom? Or had he not a particular reference to those who were already professors, who were not careful to maintain good works? He says *works*, in the plural number, of course more than one thing spoken of.—

This text is much used by some to prove that even that faith, on which our salvation depends, is a dead faith untill we are baptized. If this be the fact then we baptize the applicant on a dead faith, etc. Do, brother Stone, if you please answer these difficulties. To the wise they may appear to be light, but to me they are irreconcilable to the idea that baptism and the second birth are synonymous. I am well apprised of my want of qualifications to appear as a writer in the Christian Messenger. I am only an applicant for information.—. I wrote to you on the same subject before you left Kentucky, but I have not as yet received an answer. Yours in high esteem and brotherly love.

RICHARD B. M'CORKLE.

REPLY TO R. B. M'CORKLE.

Dear Bro. We have been compelled to write so much on baptism to satisfy inquirers, that we began to conclude it proper to leave the subject before the public, and go on to perfection. Your objections are not novel, and have been repeatedly answered in the Messenger and the Harbinger. They are presented in a new dress, and doubtless they have weight in your mind, and in the minds of others to incline you to reject a doctrine esteemed a doctrine of Christ.—From your known honesty and candor, and from the high esteem in which you are held by me, I will attend to your objections against our views of John 3. 5. You think that Christ had no reference to baptism (immersion) in his conversation with Nicodemus, and state your reasons numerically, as follows.

Obj. 1st. Our Lord was not treating on the subject of Baptism; but of being born again, ' There is not one word used which can have any reference to immersion, but the word *water*, etc.

Ans. Your assertion to the contrary cannot nullify the universal testimony of the Fathers of the first centuries, nor of all the sects now extant, who believe in water baptism—they all refer this text to water baptism. Granted they all may have erred; but the inspired writers are true. Let us hear them explain the phrase, *born of water*. Eph. 5, 26. 'That he may sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the washing (*to loutro*, or bath) of water by the word.' Tit. 3, 5. 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing (dia loutrou, bath) of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' You will admit that *regeneration* and *born again*, mean the same thing. You will admit that the word *loutron* properly means a *bath*. In Titus Paul calls it a bath of regeneration, in Ephesians he calls it a bath of water. Doubtless he meant the same thing; it is therefore undeniable, that the bath by which they were cleansed and regenerated or born again

was a bath of water. To be born of water then means to be baptized or immersed in water, and to come out of it. The texts you have advanced, as, 'whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst' are not to the point, and it is granted, they have no reference to immersion. But can this be said of those just considered? Indeed the analogy of being born of water, born from the dead or from the grave, and born of a woman, is so striking that it seems to fix the meaning of John, 3, 5.

Obj. 2nd. To say that Christ had reference to immersion in the above named conversation, cannot be proved by scripture, and has its foundation merely in inference.

Ans. My brother is too positive, and my references above prove it. To them you are referred for the answer to your 2nd objection.

Obj. 3. It cannot be proved from the New Testament, that Christ or his disciples ever taught the christian Baptism until after his resurrection

Ans. Here is another broad assertion in opposition to the proof already adduced in my answer above. To this again you are referred.

Obj. 4. The doctrine of baptism and the second birth are no where associated together as being synonymous, etc.

Ans. I know of none who hold this doctrine. For the second birth includes both, *born of water*, and *born of the spirit*. It has been proved that the bath of water, and the bath of regeneration, are synonymous, and that by this phraseology, baptism is signified. In this baptism and regeneneration are associated together. By the bath of regeneration we are not to understand the renewing of the Holy Ghost; for the Apostle makes a plain distinction.—'He hath saved us by the bath of regeneration, and, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.'—This distinction is commonly observed in the scriptures.—'Be baptized and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'—'Born of water and spirit,' etc. I have no doubt that the reason why baptism is called the bath of regeneration, is because by it the believer was sanctified, or set apart as holy to the Lord, and brought into the kingdom, or new dispensation. This new dispensation is expressly called *the regeneration*. Matt. 19, 28.

You add, 'Peter speaks of being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God.' Does my brother think tht any are born by the word of God, till that word be believed and obeyed? Is not baptism enjoined by the word as well as faith, repentance and prayer? Surely. You add, 'every one that loveth is born of God.' This is true; and it is also true, 'that this is the love of God that we keep his commandments.'

You advert to our former experience of the love of God prior to our baptism. In this we do not differ. But if God blest us, when we were honestly ignorant of our duty, let us not plead this as a rea-

son why he will bless others, where these days of ignorance are past. Let all repent.

Obj. 5. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.—You take the word *see* in its common acceptation, and then draw your inference—that if born again signifies immersion, none but the immersed can see the kingdom of God.

Ans. You add that some take the word to signify to enjoy—I add, to taste, or relish. This meaning often is affixed to the word in the scriptures, though disapproved by you, with regard to baptism; for you infer that if baptism be intended, none but the immersed can enjoy or relish the kingdom of heaven. You, my dear brother, do not see that your arguments are equally against every text which speaks of baptism; they go to nullify the ordinance entirely. Try a few, Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins. But you would say this cannot mean water baptism, for then all the unimmersed or unbaptized are yet in their sins—Again: The like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us.—This you would say cannot mean water baptism, or immersion; for this would exclude all the unimmersed from salvation. And so you might reason away the doctrine *in toto*.

Having stated your objections you proceed to give your own views of the conversation, in these words, 'To me it appears there are but two births spoken of, viz, a natural and spiritual. You add, 'If to be born of water and spirit is baptism, no person has ever entered the kingdom of heaven but the immersed.' None contend that born of the spirit means baptism—But do my brother, take heed lest you explain away, or nullify baptism by your charity. As I said before, your arguments apply with equal force against every text, where baptism is named. You plead for ignorance,—I plead for truth, for God's plan of saving a sinner out of the kingdom, which plan is that he believe, repent and be baptized. 'He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.' While we thus plead for, and enforce God's plan, we are disposed to indulge as much charity for the honest worshipper, though ignorant of some articles of his will, as any one else. They are in the hand of a merciful and righteous God, who will do right. The obedient spirit would do whatever his Lord required if he knew his master's will. This is, we hope, accepted for the deed.

What you have said of immersed of the flesh, and immersed of spirit etc. I feel no disposition to answer. I hardly thought my grave brother would have fled to such extremes. It looks like a taunting jeer. I might have read the verse with his acknowledged sense of it in a very ludicrous manner too—He says the natural and spiritual birth is intended. Then it follows, except a man be born of water, that is, born naturally. This was the very error of Nicodemus—a man 30 years of age born naturally! I forbear.

My dear bro: your views expressed in the latter part of your communication on regeneration are so speculative and cloudy, that I know

not what to say. I am confident, that had you not been afraid lest you might say something that might be construed to favor baptism, you would have written more intelligibly. Once more I write, that if any hold baptism to be regeneration, in the common use of the word as meaning the renewing of the Holy Ghost, a renewed creature etc. I DO NOT: nor do I know the man on earth that does. I only view it as a part of the great plan, through obedience to which plan, God has promised salvation, and the Holy Spirit.

I know not what effect my reply may have in removing your difficulties. If this fail I despair of future efforts. Do my brother apply to another on this subject, who may more effectually answer your objections. Grace, mercy and peace be with you.

EDITOR.

HERESY HUNTING.

I am so well pleased with one passage of the address of Doc. Skinner of Andover Theological Seminary, that I cannot refrain from republishing it. "Coming from a man in the station which he occupies, it must have created some surprise." I transfer it from the Millennial Harbinger. EDITOR.

"And yet, Mr. President, it is the impression of some persons, that there are too many ministers. All professions, it has been said, are overstocked. In almost every place, there are more lawyers than are wanted; and at some places at least, there are also more clergymen than are wanted. There is cause, Sir, for this impression. The demand for ministers of the Gospel is indeed coming up into our ears from every part of the land, and almost of the world; but still we should not wonder that some men should think that there are more ministers than are wanted. It is true, mournfully true, that of certain sorts of men nominally in the ministry, there are more, many more, than are wanted. I can enumerate at once several classes of ministers, of which it were well for the church and the world, if there was not a man of them in existence; ambitious, pre-eminence-loving ministers; parish, or rather salary seeking ministers; indolent ministers; and to mention no more, heresy-hunting ministers, who sow discord in the church by magnifying the points of honest difference, and making nothing of the great points of agreement, among the faithful servants and friends of Christ—were it not, Sir, cause for thanksgiving to God, if small as the number of the ministry is, compared to what is demanded by the wants of a perishing world, it were yet quite as much smaller, as it would be made, by the subtraction of every name contained in each of these classes?

[Dr. Skinner would have been much nearer the truth, if he had

mentioned heresy-preaching ministers, as a class of men, which the church could well spare, and from which, it would be a blessing, if she was delivered.—*Ed. Pres.*]

NUMBER II.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

[Continued from page 20.]

Having in the last number given reasons, convincing reasons I hope, why all christians should be united in one body, I now proceed to the second Query, which is involved in more difficulty, as follows:

2ndly. *How shall all christians be united?*

In answer to this question, I shall show on what plans they cannot unite, and then shew the divine plan on which they can unite.

1. They cannot unite on any creed invented, or that can be invented by man. This appears so evident that it seems not to need the support of argument. Facts are stubborn things, and, from the beginning, prove the position. The Methodist in the full belief of his creed, cannot honestly receive that of the Presbytorian or Baptist, nor can the Presbyterian, or Baptist receive that of the Methodist without hypocrisy. This is true with regard to every sect. While they therefore adhere to their creeds, and support them, it is impossible to unite in one body. While on this subject I take the liberty to introduce to the reader Mr. Baxter, of blessed memory, extracted from the West. Messenger.

"By the occasion of heretics, quarrels and errors, the serpent steps in, and will needs be a spirit of zeal in the church; and he will so overdo against heretics, that he persuades them that they must enlarge their creed and add this clause against one, and that against another, and all was put for the perfecting and preserving the christian faith. And so he brings it to be a matter of so much wit to be a Christian, (as Erasmus complains,) that ordinary heads were not able to reach it. He had got them, with a religious cruelty to their own and others' souls, to lay all their salvation and the peace of the church, upon some unsearchable mystery about the Trinity, which God either never revealed, or never clearly revealed, or never laid so great a stress upon; yet he persuades them that there was scripture proof enough for these; only the scriptures spoke it but in premises or in darker terms, and they must put together into their creeds the consequences, and put it into plainer expressions, which heretics might not so easily corrupt, pervert or invade. Was not this reverend zeal? And was not the devil seemingly now a Christian of the most judicious and forward sort.

But what got he at this one game? 1. He necessitated implicit faith even in fundametals, when he had got points among fundamentals, beyond the public reach. 2. He necessitated some living judge for the determining of fundamentals, that is, what is it in sense that the people must take for fundamentals. 3. He got a standing verdict against the perfection and sufficiency of the scripture [and consequently against Christ, his Spirit, his Apostles, and the Christian Faith,] that it will not so much as afford us a creed or system of fundamentals, or points absolutely necessary to salvation and brotherly communion, in fit or tolerable phrases, but we must mend the language at least. 4. He opened a gap for human additions, at which he might afterwards bring in more at his leisure. 5. He framed an engine for an infallible division, and to tear in pieces the church, casting out all as heretics, who would not subscribe to his additions, and necessitating separation by all dissenters, to the world's end, till the devil's engine be overthrown. 6. And hereby he lays a ground upon the divisions of Christians, to bring men into doubt about all religion, as not knowing which is the right. 7. And he lays the ground of certain heart-burnings and mutual hatred, contentions, revilings, and enmity. Is not here enough, at one cast? Doth there need any more to the establishing of Romish and hellish darkness? Did not this one act found the seat of Rome? Did not the devil get more in his cloak in one day, than he could get by his sword in three hundred years? Yea, and where modesty restrains men from putting all such inventions and explications into their creeds, the devil persuaded men, that they being the judgments of godly divines (no doubt to be reverenced, valued, and heard,) it is almost as if they were in the creed, and therefore, whoever dissenteth, must be noted with a black coal, and must disgrace him and avoid communion with him, as an heretic. Had it not been for this one plot, the Christian faith had been kept pure; religion had been one, the church had been one, and the hearts of Christians had been more one than they are. Had not the devil turned orthodox, he had not made so many true Christian heretics as Epiphanius and Austin have enrolled in the black list. Had not the enemy of the truth and of peace got into the chair, and made so pathetic an oration as to enflame the minds of the lovers of truth to be overzealons for it, and do to much, we might have had truth and peace to this day. Yea, still if he see any man of peace and moderation stand up to reduce men to ancient simplicity he presently seems the most zealous for Christ, and tells the unexperienced leaders of the flocks, that it is in favor of some heresy that such a man speaks; he is plotting a carnal syncretism, and attempting the reconcilement of Christ and Belial; he is tainted with popery, or Socinianism, or Arminianism, or Calvinism, or whatsoever may make him odious with those he speaks to. O, what the devil hath got by overdoing!"

2. Christians cannot unite on the one divine creed, the Bible itself while *opinions* of that book are made tests of christian fellowship.—Now it is evident that those opinions are as diverse and as variant as the faces of those who possess them. Of private opinions every man has a right; to deprive him of this is to deprive him of thinking, and to make him a slave. But no uninspired man has a right to impose his opinions on another, and compel him to receive them on pain of excommunication.

3. Nor can professed christians unite in one body without they possess the same one spirit—the spirit of Christ. We may abandon all human creeds, and formularies as bonds of union—we may relinquish the idea of making opinions of truth the test of fellowship,—we may take the Bible alone, and bible facts, without note or comment, as the only standard of faith and practice, and of christian union; yet without the spirit union can never be effected, nor continued. The attempt to unite righteousness and unrighteousness, piety and impiety, the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world, is as vain as the attempt to unite fire and water, or light and darkness.—Such union is impossible, unnatural, and not to be desired. Vain attempts to promote such union have been the ruin of the church, and must be abandoned. Can the body be said to possess one spirit, one mind, and one soul, when composed of such discordant members as are too commonly seen in the different churches?

4. They cannot unite with the different names, by which the different parties are distinguished. Party names have always produced bad effects, and have exerted a mighty influence against christian union. As soon as a man is called a Methodist, the Presbyterian looks at him with a jealous eye, and attaches to him all the errors of that sect, which as a dark cloud roll before the view of his mind, and stand in the way of union. So with regard to all sectarian names. Indeed such is the power of sectarian names, that they have divided those whose faith and practice were the same! It is a common remark that party names are nothing. The persons who make such remarks must be ignorant indeed of human nature, as pourtrayed in ancient and modern history, in the political as well as religious circles of the world. A party name is a strong bond of union in all the sects, by which a person wearing it is judged a friend or foe, approved or disapproved, loved or despised, received or rejected, by those who wear a different name. All these party bonds must be broken, and forgotten, or christian union will never be known on earth; and party union will still stand as a mountain in the way of the world's salvation.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

EXTRACT.

My old Brother Stone, there are yet a few names in this section that fear God and work righteousness. After all that you, and the other Editors have said about the Roman Catholics taking the valley of the Mississippi, there is a more potent enemy than the Pope that stalks abroad in the Great Valley almost unrestrained; I mean the love of money. It was once thought, in primitive times and in scripture language, to be the *Root of all evil*, but in modern times, by the mass of professors, it appears almost to be the one thing needful. The road to wealth and preferment is so plain, and the range for speculation so wide, it appears destined to swallow up Christianity. Monney is so plenty, that it is flying almost like leaves in Autumn. Tell Brother Reynolds to cry aloud, and spare not. Now may our Heavenly Father keep and preserve us from the overflowing flood, to his everlasting kingdom.

SAM'L ROGERS.

Jan. 1, 1836.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Brother Hughs Bowles of Macon co. Ill. writes, Jan. 30. 'Our society is still increasing. I baptized 7 at our October meeting, and 2 at the meeting before. Last Sunday I preached to a very large, attentive and weeping coagregation. I addressed them on the word of reconciliation. After preaching 3 were immersed. I never saw a more general excitement among the people to hear the truth: May the Lord prosper his cause.' H. B.

Brother Samuel M'Cormick of Mt. Sterling, Ky. writes. The cause of Christ is not prospering here, as it was a few years ago.—The reason for this is that the things of this world have gotten the uppermost seat in the hearts of the professed christians. The spirit of prayer is measurably lost. Yet there are some additions. Last Lord's day I baptized three.'

Brother N. R. Ellis near Indianapolis writes Feb. 7. 'We are getting on very well here in religious affairs. Our church, which numbered only 7 or 8 between 2 and 3 years ago when I came to this place, has now about forty well disciplined members. I have baptized 8 persons since I last wrote you.'

Brother Thos: J. Scott of Indiana, near Crawfordsville, Feb. 7, 1836. 'We have a fine church here, well organized, and in gospel

order. Twelve or 15 have been added since September last. Bro: Scott asks, 'When and where the king (Immanuel) was crowned?'—He thinks that Christ has not yet been crowned, and will not be before his second advent to the world.

Of this we may hereafter say something.

RECEIPTS SINCE LAST NUMBER.

KENTUCKY; HENDERSON. Geo. Robinson 9 by J. S. Smith. TRENTON. J. Woodward 8, 9 2,50. G. Waddle 9, 1,25; he paid agent for 8. H. Durett, half of 8, 9, 1,75. MT. STERLING, Samuel M'Cormick 10,00 KEENE. Mary Hughs paid agent Riggs at Paris 9 1,25.

OHIO. MT. HEALTHY, R. Compton 9, 10. A. Lane sen. 9, 10. Elijah Needles 10. PIQUA. Abel Brandon, Eliza Byram, Js. Brown, for 10.—TROY, Josh. Peck, A. M'Cullough, J. Coe, Ben. Wharton, for 10. NEW CARLISLE, E. Korey 10. YELLOW SPRING. M. Baker 9, 10.

ILLINOIS. JACKSONVILLE, Js. B. Riggs, J. Campbell, D. Denishn, Eph, Smith 10. Mrs. Sarah Tilton 10, Wm: B. Warren, 10, Theodore S. Barton, 9, 10. HOLLANDS GROVE, Dan'l Travis, 10, Mrs. Demming, 10, N. Owen 10, C. Sparks, 10, he paid 9 to J. T. Johnson. Sol. Tucker 9, Bro: Davenport for R. B. M'Corkle. Wm. Reeder and John Dawdy for 9. RUSHVILLE, Geo. Kirkham 9. MONMOUTH, C. Dewesse 9.

TENNESSEE. GALLATIN, Jona Wilson, Sam'l Wilson, Ad. Wilson, Wm. Bell, John Gourley, for 10.

MISSOURI, PARIS, J. Wilcoxen 1,25, for Joel Noel 1,00, J. T. Bailey 1,25 Ed. Tidence 1,25 for 9.

GEORGIA. Eld. Shehane for Tho. Dester, R. B. M'Cord, Js. M'Gaughey A. W. Wright, Wm. M'Ever for 10.

MISSISSIPPI. Josi. Williams for 10, and 1,00 for Gos. Advocate, and 1,00 for Evangelist for 1835.

NEW JERSEY—Eld. Wm. Lane, for 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

INDIANA—BLOOMINGTON. G. W. Hardin 5,00 in full for his agency.—PENDLETON. Rich'd Kinnamon 9. OWENSVILLE, Jo. Rosboro 10. GREENCASTLE, G. R. Young paid some agent 7, 8, 9, and to me 10. Geo. Pearcy 10, Jos. Wells 10, Elij. Wright 10, Lem. Wright 10, Wm. Brothers 10. MIDDLETOWN, Eld. Sam. Rogers paid J. T. Johuson for Rich'd Kinnamon 8, John Crum 8, Chs. Cummings 8, Wm. Stewart 8 and half of 9, John Crum 9 and 1,25 with J. Rogers. STILESVILLE, Eld. Wm Rawlins 5,00 in full for 9. INDIANAPOLIS, N. Ellis, G. M'Ilvaine, Senour, Wm. Hobson Sqr Dawson for 9.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY B. W. STONE:

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."—PAUL

VOL. X.] JACKSONVILLE, ILLINOIS, MARCH, 1836. [No. 3

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,

Is published monthly, in Jacksonville, Illinois, at ONE DOLLAR a year, or for twelve numbers, if paid on the reception of the second number—or ONE DOLLAR AND TWENTY-FIVE cts. if not paid within six months. Persons procuring eight subscribers, and remitting the money to the editor, shall have one volume for their trouble. The postage to be paid by the subscribers. The postage is 12½ cents a year at any distance in the United States.

NUMBER II.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

[Continued from page 30.]

Having shown some of the obstacles in the way of Christian union, and having seen the insufficiency of certain plans of union, I now proceed to shew 'How christians can be united.'

1. As man-made creeds have always divided christians and stood in the way of union—these must all be abandoned, and the Bible alone received as the only foundation and rule of faith and practice. On no other platform can all christians meet. Here the church rested in her best days. Here she would have rested, and remained in sweet union, had not human creeds been introduced and established as authoritative. From this period we may date the apostacy of the church. From this period christians were divided, and many inspired with the fury of hell, persecuted each other to death, fighting under their great leader the devil, 'transformed into an angel of light. From this period the reign of darkness and ignorance commenced, called the age of darkness; for as the attention of the people was drawn to the creeds of the councils, it was of course drawn away from the Bible. They *might* believe the Bible; but *must* believe the creed. They might believe the Bible, but if their belief differed from the creed, anathemas, and death were their doom. Happy for the people, in a worldly point of view, that they were soon after prohibited entirely from reading the Bible! There was then no more danger of losing their lives; for they now believed the creed alone, because this alone they knew, or could know.—All protestants with one voice condemn this conduct of our fathers, and highly extol the Reformers of the sixteenth century, for restor-