Brother Js. A. Williams of Blountsville, Alabama, writes Feb. 13. That they have very little preaching in their section of country, and solicits the preachers to call on them. They want Hymn books.

Brother Henry Mavity of Cross Plains, Ia. writes Jan. 12, 1836. There were a few brethren formed into a church a few weeks past. Since that time I have baptized 7. Truth is gaining ground. Amen.'

Some communications are sent me, that cannot be printed without transcribing the whole. For this work I have not time, and beg my friends to excuse me. Many queries are also proposed, which have been frequently answered by me before. We refer to former volumes. To send answers in private letters, is too great a burden to impose on editors. Half their time would be taken up in doing it for all who apply. The want of friendly regard should not be imputed to us for this neglect.

The first Lord's day of this month we baptized two, in Jersey prairie, Illinois.

EDITOR.

RECEIPTS SINCE LAST NUMBER.

KENTUCKY. Louisville. Wm. O. Bohannon for 10. Perryville, J. Chaplin for self 10. Mrs. Tilford 9, 10. L. Marett 9 10.

OHIO. Athens. Nick. Francis 10, Geo. Rathburn 10. Felicity. Bro. Knowles last Nov. sent 5 00, lost by mail. Williamsport. Elder J. Cade sent last Aug. 3 00 for self, Burbridge and Davis, lost by mail.—He also paid 2 00 for 7 8 not yet received by me.

ILLINOIS. Jacksonville, J. Vanpelt, Cor. Hoagland, M. Hoagland, E. Smith, A. Foreman. Alf. Todd, Sam. M'Clure, Eld. J. Green, Js. Conover, John Dennis, P. Coffman, all for 10. A. Elder 9, Jac. Cassel 10—Downs 10. Brattleville, G. M'Whorter, 10. Athens, W. Whip, A. Powel, Jo. Powel, W. Engle, G. Blain, H. Boyer all for 10, and Js. Haiggins for 9. Clearey,s Grove, Jo. Edwards 9. Bethel, J. Wharton 10. Irish grove, N. Powel, John Powel 10. New Salem, J. Crawford 9.—Vandalia, Js. Willaford 10, Hurricane. Tho. Jett, Wm. Pointz, Wm. Vaughn, A. M'Gee 10. Macomb. E. Bristow, 9, 10. Cochran's Grove Wm. Dugger, 10. N. Good 9, 10. J. Price, 9, 10.

TENNESSEE. M'Minville, J. Davis, 5 00. Franklin, Eld. J. Callahan 9, 10. Shelbyville, J. Jacobs 9.

GEORGIA. Hancock, Elij. Callahan 9, 10. Hillsboro, A. Standifer, 5 00 for 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

INDIANA. Indianapolis, Butler K. Smith 1 25 for 9. J. M. Woolen, 2 50 for 8, 9. L. Woolen 2 50 for 8, 9. B. Roberts 2 50 for 8, 9. Ben. Emmerson 1 25 for 9. Clinton, E. Ward 9, 10, Js. Seeds 9, 10, Wm. Hartley 9. Michiwaka, John Ireland 5 00 for 9, 10, for A. H. Long 1 25 for 9. for J. Alexander for 10. John Fox, free, for 9.

ALABAMA. Florence, Eld. Js. Young, 10 00, for self 10, H. Thrasher 9, 10, A. Ammonet 9, John Car 9, he sent 5 00 last July, lost by mail.

NOTICE.

Subscribers for the Messenger, in and near Jacksonville, will find their numbers hereafter at Robert and J. Cassel's store.

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, APRIL, 1836. [No. 4

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.

THE BAPTIST BANNER.

The editors of the Baptist Banner have politely favored me with their journal for exchange. The favor is acknowledged and reciprocated. My attention was immediately caught by a piece headed, 'The gospel in the water, or the Reformation, by A. Campbell, and B. W. Stone.' Of this piece the 3 and 4 numbers only have I seen. From the very caption I conjectured they were a coarse tissue of satire, not written for the conviction of the supposed errorists, but in order to blast their influence in the world: nor was I deceived in my conjecture. The writer seems well to understand the old maxim, 'Divide, and conquer.' This design is apparent throughout the two numbers I have seen.

The writer gives in a few words 'the distinctive principles of the reformation,' as he supposes. 1. That in a believing immersion, remission is alone received, or can be obtained in this life. 2. That the knowledge of this is essential to the divine power and efficacy of immersion—without this faith immersion is as empty as a blasted nut, it leaves the person unjustified, unpardoned, unreconciled, and unsaved. 3. The vicarious sufferings and death of Christ, as the atonement are rejected altogether, as wholly repugnant to salvation by grace; and one of them declares that if the blood of Christ has any influence on God or his government in the pardon of sin, he does not know it, and denies that it is revealed in the Bible, the creed of the reformation. 4. They waive any difference of opinion on this doctrine, but are firmly united in a believing immersion for remission of sins.

The writer may believe what he has here stated; but it is well known by all acquainted with my writings that what he imputes to me, with regard to baptism, is untrue. I have opposed the ideas in

plain, unequivocal language, not once only, but often; and all the readers of the Messeuger know it. I do believe in baptism connected with faith and repentance, for remission, but the inferences mentioned by the writer, are not received by me.

On the doctrine of atonement, I cannot be understood. The veil of tradition is too thick for the rays of simple truth to penetrate. I would ask the 'Observer,' Where have I rejected the vicarious sufferings and death of Christ as the atonement? According to the definition of vicarious sufferings, and atonement, as given in your Philadelphia confession of faith, I acknowledge I have rejected them.—That book has confined all the efficacy of Christ's sufferings to God. You never read in that book of sinners receiving any moral influence from faith in the blood of Christ; but the whole efficacy of his death passed off God, and is entirely limited to him, and his law, and government, according to that book. I acknowledge the 'Observer' has learned that a moral influence is exerted on the sinner by the death of Christ; but for this he is not indebted to his confession, but to the same book from which I obtained them. In these things we are agreed. But he condemns me for saying, If the blood of Christ has any influence on God, or his government in the pardon of sin, I know it not. This is the point of difference between me and the orthodox world. They say the blood of Christ reconciled God to sinners,—made him propitious to them—satisfied his justice, by paying the debt of punishment due the sinner—purchased his favor —procured a pardon, and secured the honors of his government. Now where in the book of God do we find any of these doctrines? I want a thus saith the Lord, or the words of inspiration, and not the scholastic divinity of the dark ages, a specimen of which the 'Observer' has given us; as 'the atonement of Jesus Christ did not consist in the death of Christ simply *as death*, or in such a death as was suffered by Paul and other good men, as was alledged by B. W. Stone, but it consisted in being *such a death* of *such a person*.' This unintelligible jargon can only excite the wonder and admiration of the ignorant, and the disgust of the intelligent; but it has no tendency to convince the honest enquirer. I only present this as a specimen of the writer's reasoning. To the scriptures he seldom appeals; The doctrines and speculations of men are his strong hold. Conscious of his failure, he says, 'I do wish that elder Noel, or Dillard, or Buck, or some other person capable, would write a number or two for the Banner on these subjects.' I heartily join the Observer in this wish. Doctor Noel, and Mr. Dillard, I know to be men of intelligence, and deep research. They know that declamation, and unscriptural assertions such as the Observer uses, cannot convince one who measures all doctrines by the Bible standard. If their arguments prevail, we shall have cause to bless them as the instruments of our salvation. If they deem us unworthy of their notice, in doing this, let their paper be silent in retailing scraps to our injury. If these worthy editors shall comply with our wishes, we earnestly request them to define *atonement* in the language of truth, and shew us where the blood of Christ has had any direct influence with God, his law and his government, in granting pardon, and grace to the sinner.

EDITOR.

SPECULATION.

There is evidently a spirit of speculation afloat in the world, and even among us, who so loudly protest against it. This spirit should be checked speedily, or we shall split on the same rock, which has distracted, and ruined the christian world. There are some philosophic minds that cannot admit the gross ideas of a local heaven or a local hell. These terms, *heaven* and *hell*, are not places, but certain states of the mind. This I call unprofitable and mischievous speculation, and must protest against it. Were it true, neither the Lord nor his disciples ever taught it. They best knew the doctrine which suited an ignorant world. It is impossible to conceive of something existing nowhere.

There are others among us of high standing in society, who advocate the doctrine of materialism,—that when a man, consisting of soul, body and spirit dies, the soul, body and spirit—the whole man dies, and remains under the power of death till the ressurrection.—Against this doctrine I must protest, though advocated by those I most tenderly love, and respect. My reasons I will state in few words.

1. Jesus says, Matt. 10, 28, 'Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.' The stroke that kills the body, cannot kill the soul, therefore a part of man (the soul) lives, when another part (the body) is dead.

2. Acts 23, 8, 'For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.' The Sadducees did not deny there was a spirit in a living man; but that it ceased to live at death—spirit and body both died together, and were annihilated; for they denied their resurrection. This doctrine of the Sadducees, our Lord confuted in a conversation with them in Matt. 22, 32, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' The conclusion is irresistable, that the old patriarchs were then living in part; their bodies were dead, but their souls or spirits were alive.

3. Jesus said to the penitent thief, 'Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.' Paradise no where signifies death, nor the grave. If this forced meaning be given to the word, it was poor consolation to the penitent thief. Death and the grave were his dread. Paradise means the third heaven, where intelligent beings

dwell; for Paul heard unspeakable words there. Paradise is a place of bliss. Now it is evident that the soul or spirit of Jesus, and of the penitent thief, were not dead, and in the grave; but were alive in Paradise, and there remained till the resurrection of the body.

4. The protomartyr Stephen when kneeling on the brink of time, prayed thus; 'Lord Jesus receive my spirit.' Stephen did not believe that his spirit would die with the body; his murderers could not kill the soul. This comfortable truth he learned from his Lord. Stephen firmly believed in a local heaven, for he looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, behold, I see the heavens opened, etc.

5. Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. 2 Cor. 5. Can this sentiment agree with the doctrine that the soul or spirit dies with the body? Or that the soul can not exist when the body is dead?

The same sentiment is plainly expressed in Phil. 1, 23, 24, 'For I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

I might multiply quotations and arguments to the same point, but deem it unecessary. Brethren, stand fast in the gospel of the Son of God, be not carried about with every wind of doctrine. Beware of uncharitableness, lest it grow to hatred, and end in irreligion.—Never forget that God has a people in Babylon. Love them, and show by arguments of love their error, and in the same spirit point them the way of escape. If they oppose in an angry spirit, instruct them still in meekness, and never cease to warn them, and to teach them their duty.

EDITOR.

NUMBER III.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

[Continued from page 34.]

In two preceding numbers I have shewn, Why all christians should be united—How they can be united; and now I proceed to the last query,

3. When should all be united?

I answer, NOW: for if it be right, if it be the will of God, if it be the christian's duty, if it be for the salvation of the world, that all christians should be one, then now is the accepted time. If christian union be *right*, disunion is wrong; if it be the will of God that they be one, it is opposition to his will to be divided; if it be their duty to be united, it is their sin to be disunited; if their union be the salvation of the world, their disunion is its ruin.

Will any say, God's time is not yet come, when this desirable event shall take place? Avaunt such trifling! Does he command, and enjoin it upon us to be one, and expressly forbid disunion? Will he lay us under obligations, which we have no power to perform? Has he laid on us the necessity to commit sin, and disobey express commands? Yes, indeed, if the time is not come when he will give us the power—if that time is yet future, and depends upon his sovereign will. Who will, who dare thus plead?

But, says another, it will require a long time to effect this great object; for, says the presbyterian, the church sessions must memorialize their presbyteries, and the presbyteries, their synods; and the synods their general assembly, that all may act in concert.. So the methodist from their classes to the next higher court, and so onwards to their general conference, for the same purpose. So the baptist, and so all other sects. On this plan the long desired object will never be attained. Large bodies move slowly. Sacrifices, great sacrifices must be made on the altar of truth; sectarian peace and unity must cease, before peace and unity can be restored to the true church of Christ. Every party has its ensign or stand of colors, which waves over their heads, enlists their service, and concentrates their force—Our Lord and king has his ensign set in the midst; to it the people are to flow, and find a glorious rest. His voice is to all, Come unto me, enlist under my banners, unite in me. Shall any respond, I can not obey thee now; my minister, my father, my mother, my wife, my husband, my children, my nearest and dearest relations and friends, are presbyterians, or methodists, or baptists—I cannot forsake them all to obey thee. Poor, unworthy creature! Do you think this conduct pleasing to your King? Rather than offend your minister, relations and friends, you will disobey your Lord, neglect your duty, and let the world die in sin! Your minister, your relations and friends are all living in sin, while living in disunion—will you continue in sin to secure their smiles, and incur the frowns and displeasure of your Lord? God forbid!

If every one would read the scriptures for himself, as by them he will be judged at last; if all would act up to their conviction of truth, independently, the great obstacle to christian union would be removed. All would soon flow together in one body. If every humble christian, the life of whose religion is divine—whose heart sighs for union, and whose lips speak the meaning of his heart in humble prayer to God, that all who believe in Jesus according to the scriptures, might be one as the Father and Son are one—if every humble christian of every sect, wearing this character, were to exert himself, not in wishing and praying only, but also in acting, the work would, like an overflowing flood, sweep off all refuges of lies, and the good of every name would flow together into one glorious body.

Is it not our duty to act right, though our minister, or nearest relatives act wrong? Shall we sin because they do? Shall we live in disobedience, because they do? Shall we expect justification by such conduct? No. While one waits for another, nothing can be done to good effect. Had I a voice louder than seven thunders, I would call upon the christian world to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and hear and obey the Savior's voice flowing from the sacred oracles. Let not one congregation wait for another, nor one individual wait for his fellow; the command of the Lord is imperious, and too sacred to be trifled with. Hear, and obey.

Furious opposition, fire and sword, may follow the obedient children; but none but such will venture to pass through this fiery ordeal. The wheat alone will be gathered into the garner; the chaff will be left for fire. Jesus came to bring fire down from heaven; that is, he brought down the truth from heaven, which will enkindle the fire of hell, rage and persecution in the breasts of opposers—families shall be divided, three against two, and two against three, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

But where shall we go? To Jesus in his word revealed, unite on his word, and in his spirit, and wear his name alone. Then shall Zion shine forth in the glory of her Lord, and great shall be her peace. Righteousness shall flow down as a mighty stream, bearing away sin and pollution from the world; then will the world believe, and be converted.

Hereafter I will attend to objections against the doctrine.

EDITOR.

EXTRACT FROM THE CHRISTIAN INVESTIGATOR.

Creeds and sects are increasing; error and transgression are abounding, and still intelligent men, (yes otherwise *intelligent* men) say that this order of things will bring about the long expected prayed-for day when "the watchman shall see eye to eye," when all shall be one as Jesus and his Father are one. Strange infatuation! When there shall be "one Lord and his name one," will any of our friends be so kind as to tell us whose creed will be the standard, and whether the children of God and the "Ministers of Jesus Christ" will meet in synods, associations or conferences!?

Will any of our brethren who plead for "reformation," and boast of their light and knowledge, but who scarcely ever pray in their families, to whom the closet and an hour of meditation are as rare as is the perusal of the Living Oracles by a professed Infidel, tell us how they expect ever to overcome by the "blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony."* How do you expect, my reforming brother, to see christians one, when you are daily living in the neglect of the

*Such men should not be called *brethren*.—EDT.

only means put in your hand by which the glorious cause of union may be consummated? Vain are your expectations without engaging *personally* in this work! Your hopes will never be realized.—God will soon take vengeance on the hypocritical professor and then I fear you will neither have "part nor lot" in the blissful reign of Immanuel. Your own heart will not be right in the sight of God.—Alas! your every day practice says—"I have joined the church—been babtized into the Saviour's death—I go to meeting on the "Sabbath"—now and then I frequent the Lord's table—the desire of the heart is prayer, and I often desire the Lord to save my soul at last and bless me now—the Lord is good and merciful and he will give me a crown of glory at the resurrection morn." And is this the course you actually pursue? Is this your situation? And you expecting Heaven and imortality? Vain and impious thought! Remember, brethren, if we would see the disciples of Christ united we must *live* as christians did in the first ages of christianity. We must take the "whole armor of God." there must be a line of demarcation drawn between the church and the world. That line must be evident in our honesty, devotedness, and integrity in all our intercourse with the world. We must make up our duties and consider our high stations. We are no better than the sects any farther than we are more given up to the service of God and possess more of the spirit of Jesus Christ. Let this truth ever be before us, and then we shall see the necessity of living more like real disciples.—But O the fashions and forms of the "Old Harlot!" How well the daughters, grand daugters, &c. love to follow her example!

Do you ask what I would have you to do? I answer: conduct at all times in such a manner as to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man; every day appropriate time enough to read a portion of the living oracles and meditate upon them; practice the precepts and follow the example of Jesus and the Holy Twelve. That is all I ask. By so doing you will be a city on an hill—your light will be discovered.

NUMBER II.

GOSPORT, IA. February 16, 1836.

Brother Stone.—It is with some diffidence that I now send you a few lines more for your paper; you have requested the brethren who write for the Messenger, to write on practical subjects. Some able brethren have complied with your request, and have united their energies with yours, and loudly call upon the brethren for practical *reformation*—religion in practice. I have no doubt your efforts will have the happy effect of reforming society generally. Seeing the necessity of united effort, at this *crisis*, I have determined to march up boldly, and cast in my 'mite.' I hope the brethren will not despise the day of small things. My object in writing, is to aid, so far

as I can, in rousing my dear brethren and sisters from their slumbers, from their carnal security—to stir up their minds by way of remembrance—to call upon all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, to come out from the world and be separate; to lay aside its love, spirit and practice, and quit their vain attempts to serve God and mammon, to have on the wedding garment, their lamps trimmed and burning—that they may be prepared to meet our returning King. In short as the apostle Peter expresses it, 'Besides these, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, (courage) and to courage knowledge, and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience Godliness; and to Godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity—for if these be in you and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.' Again, 'If you do these things you shall never fall, and so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom.' Brethren, we have talked *about* reformation long enough, it is high time we had commenced the practice.

We have come to a crisis in our history; the theory of the gospel has done all it can alone, the world is in possession of our reasonings, arguments and conclusions; they are now looking for the *practical* part; *indeed*, the reformation so happily begun among us, can go no further, unless the dear brethren and sisters show by their untiring zeal, and disinterested labors of love, and their great devotion to the cause of truth, that they are christians of the original stamp, cast in the gospel mould. Ah! this would give success to the truth; it would run and be glorified, in the salvation of thousands, who now stand on the precipice of infidelity, or scepticism.

We have renounced all *human* systems for one of *heavenly* origin; a perfect law of liberty, one that will judge us in the last day. But brethren, what value do you suppose the world will lay on this divine system, when we, who profess to believe and practice it, are no better than the sons of error and sectarian delusion—the devoted victims of bigotry and superstition? If we have discarded every system of human invention; *because they*, like their authors, *are imperfect*; and tended to separte the lambs of Jesus—let us show by our life and conduct, that we have embraced a better system; let us love as brethren, all who do the will of our heavenly Father; let us touch not, taste not, handle not, all things that are to perish in the using.—'Forgetting those things which are behind, let us reach forward towards those things which are before.' Let us, brethren, each do his duty, stand in his proper lot; then we shall see reformation spreading far and wide; the sleeping Earth arising from a slumber of ages, to search the scriptures for themselves, to see whether these things are so. We, thus continuing steadfast in the Apostle's doctrine, in fellowship, 'breaking of bread, and in prayers'—'Of one heart, and of one soul.' The gospel would sound out from us—peace and harmony every where pervade society, and pristine beauty adorn the church of the First Born.

JAMES M. MATHERS.

INDIANA, SULLIVAN Co. Feb. 12, 1836.

Dear Brother.—We find our Lord and his apostles giving the most unequivocal directions to the ancient christians to let their light shine, that others seeing their good works, might glorify their Father which is in heaven. All experience has taught me, that to effect any praiseworthy deed, it must proceed from a thorough conviction, that the act is right, and the deed salutary. Both must have their origin in the honest conviction of the actor. This thought originated from observation; I see so little of the fruits of the Spirit, hear so much said upon reformation, and see so little done in reformation, so much said about the sects and sectarianism, and so little done in gospel charity, in opposition to sectarians, it does appear to me, that the brethren, or many of them, think that error can be overcome by tongue censure, and have lost sight of the great lessosn of brotherly love, 'overcome evil with good,' and the many simple weapons that the gospel places within our reach, and without which our reformation is but as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

I have lived long, and seen much; but I never knew, saw, or heard of preaching effecting anything good, without practice: and I rejoice to find much of your valuable periodical, with that of brother Campbell, devoted to the cause of practical godliness—the very marrow of Christianity. The brethren with us, appear to have correct ideas of the doctrine of the gospel, but they are too remiss in practice, many in argument invincible, but in practice overcome. Let us be consistent, and the cause will prosper; it must prosper; it is the life-giving cause of the Lord, and in the hands of the prudent, it will over all prevail. Bear with an old friend, that has been in the cause for many years, that can give personal evidence to the trying conflicts of Kentucky, and though awkward in communicating his thoughts, feels the most sincere desire for the prosperity of that religion, that has sustained him long, that will be his staff in the valley and shadow of death, and finally crown him happily in eternal day.

May the good Lord prosper you in the labors of his vineyard, and make your latter days, your best days. Long may he spare you, to plead that cause with your pen, that I have so often heard you plead with your tongue, and know you to have done in your walk.

I should be glad to see you once more, before we are called to render up our accounts to him that commands our labors; but the distance is great, and both of us well stricken in years. From such a

consideration I despair of the pleasure. The hope of meeting where separation will be no more, sustains me. May it be our happy lot so to meet, is the prayer of your old friend and brother

RICHARD MAXWELL.

For the Christian Messenger.

TAZEWELL CO. ILL, March 20, 1836.

Brother Stone—After having read your answer to my letter, I have thought that existing circumstances made it my duty to make an apology to you, and the readers of the Messenger, for the communication which I have already made to you. I have always had a desire, as far as honesty would permit, to be in union of faith with my brethren. For this, on the subject of being born again, I have labored in vain for years past. Conld I have gained one point, I never would have troubled brother Stone for help: that is, if I could have been able to understand how it was possible that a person could know and love God, receive the Holy Spirit, and obtain forgiveness of sins, and never had seen, or perceived, or possessd, or enjoyed, or as brother Stone adds, tasted or relished the kingdom of heaven, or how Christ could grant those blessings, which can flow to us only through the medium of a reconciliation to God, and the reign of Jesus by the gospel, without nullifying and making void his own positive and unconditional declaration: or how he can pass by his own word to accomodate our ignorance; that is, if baptism and being born again be the same thing.

These things have given me trouble. At length I thought I would risk my ignorance, and want of scholarship, and ask help of my aged and venerable brother Stone, in whom as a teacher, I had more confidence than I had in any man in the world. For the sake of the benefit I expected to derive from his friendly animadversion, I thought I would lay not only my difficulties, but also my own views before him. Brother Stone has I believe defended the cause of the honest worshippers of God, who are ignorant on the subject of baptism, to the great satisfaction of hundreds of pious people, and no doubt to the satisfaction of his own conscience; but I do not recollect that he has ever told us plainly, how Christ's positive declaration to Nicodemus was disposed of in administering gospel blessings to those who never had been born again.

I hope brother Stone will not think hard of me if I should complain a little of some of his remarks in his reply to my letter. Those of which I complain, I will now state. What he has said relative to my remarks on being immersed of the flesh and spirit, I complain but little. I do not pretend to see with brother Stone's discernment.

Things which may appear to have propriety with me, may look absurd to him. Of his following remarks I complain very much.

If my understanding is correct, a ridiculous idea is attached to my words, which I never intended. If an enquirer ignorantly lays himself liable to a critic, it is surely wrong to take advantage of him.—I do think my dear brother ought to have been sure that it was my intended meaning, before he accused me of ludicrous language. He says: '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.'—If I have said any thing that would justify the attachment of such a ridiculous idea to my words, I would ask the pardon of my aged and beloved brother. I did say, that Christ to Nicodemus, spoke of a natural and spiritual birth. If Christ had no reference to a natural birth, when he said, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, then I can form no idea of what he did mean. He no doubt spake of the natural birth, that Nicodemus might see, that to be born again, was in contradistinction to the natural birth. Did I not expressly say, that to me it appears that to be born of water is to be born of or by the word, or by the gospel with its blessing—that I placed these amongst the figurative scriptures?

Again, brother Stone says, I am confident that had you not been afraid of saying something that might be construed to favor baptism, you would have written more intelligibly.' Of this I complain but little. What has fixed his confidence I know not. I wish however, here to state how far I am willing to favor baptism. Immersion is the only mode. For the willful rejecter of this command, I see no chance for salvation. The penitent believer is a fit subject, and if the ordinance is attended to according to the gospel, forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit may be confidently expected. And farther, the Judge of all the earth will do right, will accept the will for the deed in all those who have it not in their power, either for want of knowing or doing. And farther, I am willing to say, that whilst the penitent believer is waiting the opportunity of baptism for remission of sin; and whilst he is reflecting on the great love of God in sending his Son into the world, and whilst he is viewing the Savior bleeding on the cross for his salvation, I would not be surprised if his heart should be filled with love to God, and be made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; and yet I say to the penitent believer, *tarry not*, but hasten to obey. This much I have often said, and now say with every possible degree of cheerfulness.

In as much as my views on the subject of being born again, were misunderstood, I beg leave here to state them in substance, in as few words as possible.

Peter tells us exactly how we are born again; that is, by the word of God. Now it appears to me, that if it was going into the water,

and coming out of the water, that Peter omitted the prime cause, and spoke only of the instrumental cause. He that believes in Jesus with all his heart, certainly sees the King in his beauty, discovers the nature of the laws of his kingdom, is reconciled to them, and has a taste and relish for every thing that pertains to the kingdom. Being born through, or by faith in the word of God, life is produced, the soul is quickened, having that faith which is of the heart, and unto righteousness, the person is now prepared to act. Faith, repentance, and baptism, being placed in front of the laws of the King, he is now ready to be immersed for the remission of his sins. Brother Stone says my arguments go to nullify baptism. I acknowledge my ignorance. It may be so. My arguments may be at war with themselves. However I hope it is still remembered, that I have not appeared in the Messenger as a teacher. I have laid my views before him for the very purpose of deriving benefit from his remarks. I have learned more from him than from any other man. Notwithstanding I humbly beg leave to make a remark or two on that point. Brother Stone says, try a few of my arguments. Arise, be baptized and wash away your sins. But you would say, it cannot mean baptism; for then all the unimmersed are yet in their sins. The like figure, whereunto baptism doth now save us. This you would say, does not mean baptism, for this would exclude all the unimmersed from salvation. It does not say that none but the immersed can have their sins washed away, therefore I think the argument is lost. If it had read thus—none but the immersed can have their sins washed away, or be saved, I think the argument would have been good, and I think I would have taken it just as it stood, as I do Christ's positive declaration to Nicodemus, and likewise, I would have thought that the priest was essential to the salvation of the world—that no priest, no forgiveness. To say that God through pity to us in our ignorance, grants us to see, or enjoy, or possess, or taste, or relish, without being born again, is a great mystery to me. If we have no sight, no enjoyment, no taste, no relish for the kingdom of heaven, what is the motive that leads us to baptism? I would to God, I could understand these things. If I am wrong, may God and the brethren forgive me. I hope for my sake, my dear brother Stone will give this a place in the Messenger as soon as possible.

RICHARD B. M'CORKLE.

REMARKS.

Our brother M'Corkle complains that I have misrepresented his views and language. That may be; this is with the public to judge. Of one thing I am certain, I cannot accuse myself of wilful misrepresentation in any case. Such an act is a sin of great magnitude. Our brother's explanations are now given to the public. They can easily determine the difference of our views, if a difference exists.

EDITOR.

From the Cumberland Presbyterian.

THE CHURCH MUST BE CONVERTED!!

The ultimate object of Christianity is the conversion of the world from the corruptions of a superstitious idolatry, to the pure and spiritual worship of the true and living God. For this end the apostles, in their day, labored and died. Modern christians begin to have right notions on this subject, and some have engaged in the great work with a zeal worthy of the cause. This is as it should be—would to God that zeal and action in diffusing the light of the Gospel were increased a thousand fold. But if any imagine that the heathen nations will be evangelized and purified while the church remains in its present deplorable condition, such are egregiously mistaken.

Suppose the world were converted, and the church still in its present condition, what then? Would there be peace on earth?—Would the sanctuary be cleansed, and Zion shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun? Suppose the heathen nations were evangelized and received within the pale of the church, would these recent converts from the corruptions of a degraded idolatry, be more devoted, heavenly minded and consistent, than those that now have a place in the church? And would their superior piety purify the church of existing corruptions? Does the mere enlargement of a church free it from corruption and improve its piety? And if the borders of the existing church were so enlarged as to embrace the whole world within its pale, all being just such christians as now fill the church, would it then be a better church? Would that be the millennial church? Did the prophets and apostles mean nothing more by their glowing descriptions of millennial glory, than the mere enlargement of the existing church?—just getting all the world to be as good as that part that now composes the church? Would that meet our notion of the millennium? Is there a christian on earth that would be satisfied with such a millennium? Do not our notions of the latter day glory as necessarily imply a better church, as the absence of idolatry? Can you conceive of millennial glory without including the idea of a pure, spiritual, holy, devoted church? Is there, as respects purity and living piety, a millennial church on the earth now? All christendom will answer NO. The church must be converted, before millennial day will dawn upon the world. This is just as undeniable as the fact that the conversion of the heathen must precede that glorious day.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

From the [Philadelphia] Presbyterian.

SECTARIANISM.

"The Presbyterian church is more destitute of a sectarian spirit than any other known branch of the christian church. We are not among the number of those who rejoice in this. Sectarian partiali-

ties may not only be indulged without uncharitableness, but are absolutely indispensible to the growth of the church. Every man who embraces any system of doctrine or church goverment; thereby becomes a sectarian; and just in proportion to the strength of his preference, will he exert himself for the diffusion of his views. Take away his sectarianism and you obscure the object for which he should exert himself, and throw himself loose upon the church as a projector to devise impracticable schemes of universal union. We have many such schemers in the Presbyterian church, who in aniversary speeches, can declaim eloquently against bigotry and exclusiveness, and distinguish themselves by proposing plans, which if executed, would immediately unite all Christians in the conversion of the world. One sad result of this anti-sectarian spirit may now be observed in the Presbyterian church. While other denomoninations are harmonious from a love to their peculiarities, it is in an alienated and divided state; while they are working effectively through their denominational institutions, it is squandering its resources; while they from a zeal in diffusing their peculiar views, are steadily increasing, it is retrograding. Such are the facts. The Presbyterian church to regain its respectability and moral influence must become more sectarian; it must cherish its peculiar institutions; it must apply its own resources; it must be more zealous in maintaining its own peculiar faith; it must be more careful to instil into its youth, a strong love for all its distinguishing features; then, and not till then, will it be a well ordered household, in which all the members shall be of one mind and one soul. Happy would be such a result; happy for the church and for the world; but it cannot occur, until Presbyterians become in fact what they are in name; and laying aside their falsely liberal opinions which confound the truth with error, content themselves in laboring definitely in lengthening the cords and strengthening the stakes of their own particular church."

REMARKS.

BY THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN.

For several years past, we have had access to all the principle religious journals published in the United States; and we are happy to say, that the above article from the (Philadephia) Presbyterian, is the first open and avowed advocacy of sectarianism we have ever seen.

With the unhappy difficulties which have so long marred the peace of the Presbyterian church, we have no disposition to interfere.—These contentions we sincerely deplore, and ardently desire that they may be speedily terminated. But when the Editor of a religious journal openly advocates sectarianism, his sentiments on that subject become public property, subject to the scrutiny of all who choose to investigate them: for let it be borne in mind, that a sectarian spirit is not peculiar to any one denomination; it appertains in some degree to all—it is not a constituent part of Presbyterianism, nor of

Methodism or any other ism. Every Christian church is, or should be as much interested in the fate of sectariaism as the Presbyterian. Therefore, in an investigation of this ism, we do not encroach upon the Presbyterian church more than any other church; nor do we design that we may say of sectarianism to be applied to that church any farther than it is influenced by a sectarian spirit; and according to the Eidtor of the Presbyterian it is freer of this spirit than any other church.

But now to the subject. Is sectarianism a virtue? So says the Presbyterian; and if so, the fact should be generally known, that other churches may cultivate this Christian spirit. It is to be regreted that the Presbyterian did not inform us whether it is one of the graces of the Spirit, or whether it partakes of the character of a duty enjoined by the gospel. We are at a loss to know to what department of Christianity it belongs. Some things are to believed others experienced and enjoyed, and others again to be practiced or performed. We should like to know to which of these classes sectarianism belongs, whether it is a doctrine, a grace of the spirit, or a Christian duty. We should like to know, again, whether it is peculiar to Christians—whether a man must be regenerated before he can be a seetarian. If the Editor of the Presbyterian is desirous that we should become a good Sectarian, he will have to define this grace or doctrine or duty or what ever it may be.

But, to be serious, we are alike astonished and grieved to hear such sentiments avowed by the Editor of a religious journal. Sectarian partialities absolutely indispensable to the growth of the church! "Take away his sectarianism, and you obscure the object for which he should exert himself! What can sectarianism be, if, in its absence, the object for which a Christian should exert himself is obscured? Is it the light of the Gospel? or is it the illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit? "The Presbyterian church, to regain its respectabilaty and moral influence, must become MORE SECTARIAN!!" Sectarianism give a church respectabilaty, and moral influence? And unite Christians, too!—make them of "one mind and one soul!" What can it be? It must be a sort of spiritual panacea. We should like exceedingly to have a definition of it. We must have been egregiously mistaken—fearfully hetrodox: for we have some how or other imbibed the notion that sectarianism was an anti scriptural, anti-chrstian, Satanical spirit, had crept into the church, producing discord, division and strife. But perhaps this is one of our "fanatical delusions," so obnoxious to certain orthodox prints. It may be that we have been led into this error from the definition which we have affixed to sectarianism. We had thought that it meant, first, a disposition to divide, or separate, or 'exscind' in consequence of a difference in sentiment; and secondly a disposition to remain separate after a division or excision has been made, laboring chiefly to disseminate our peculiar views, and when matured, exciting more solicitude in its subject, to build up his own church, than to advance the cause of Cause of Christ.

If we have been mistaken in our definition, of course we have misconceived the nature of the thing we would define. And if the Presbyterian should favor us with the true definition, there is a possibility that we may yet be reclaimed from our error. If sectarianism is the thing that will restore the church of Christ to its original unity, we too will become its advocates. For we regard the great radical doctrine of the unity of the church, as being of infinitely more importance than any or all the doctrines about which christians differ.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

OBITUARY. On Friday March 25, departed this life Mrs. Mary Rigdon, consort of Elder John Rigdon of Morgan county, Ill. She died as she lived, a firm and happy christian.

—Also, Fanny Ware, wife of Lewis Ware of Jacksonville, on the 11th of March, in the full assurance of hope.

—Also, Rebecca Cassel, wife of Jacob Cassel of Jacksonville.—She was truly a mother in Israel. Her triumph over the fear of death, in the assured hope of immortality, will long be remembered by those who witnessed the struggle.

Brother Wm. M'Daniel of Todd county Ky. writes Feb. 23, 1836. 'It is said a revival has been in Russelville, and now in Hopkinsville. Report says the Baptists, Methodists, and Cumberland Presbyterians have communed together.'

God grant that love, peace, and unity may more and more abound, till pure religion may succeed the confusion, and division which have disgraced christianity, and despoiled her of her captivating robes!

Brother Js. M. Mathers of Gosport Ia., writes March 5, 1836, that he has baptized a few since his last communication, and that brother M. Combs has baptized 12.

NOTICE.—On the Friday before the last Lord's day in May, commences our annual meeting at Springfield, for important purposes. The attention of the churches in this state is particularly invited.—It is hoped they will send their messengers at that time and place.

RECEIPTS SINCE LAST NUMBER.

KENTUCKY. DRIPPING SPRING, M. Shobe for self, Doctor Ford, J. N. Tinsley, Warren Greer, and Rob. Rogers for 10. PEMBROKE, Wm. Daniel for 10. ELKTON, Wm. Dickerson 10.

OHIO. GREENVILLE, A. Scribner agent, free, for D. Potter, J. Townsend, G. Adams, M. D. Earheart, J. Holloway, B. Roll, E. L. Carnahan, J. Carnahan, Mary Potter. Wm. Earheart, for 10.

ILLINOIS. JACKSONVILLE, Wm. Henderson, B. Cassel, J. Thompson, D. Anderson, Chs. Drake, for 10, Jos. Redman 9.

TENNESSEE. COLUMBIA, R. Mack for R. Lockridge, B. W. Jenkins, and A. V. Brown, for 10 and 2 00 more.

INDIANA. LOUISVILLE, Js. M'Clelland 9.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY B. W. STONE:

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

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

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NUMBER III.

GOSPORT IA. March 1836.

Sometimes the proclaimers of the original Gospel, injure their influence, by contending with each other about trifles; they have just preached love and union, and told the brethren not to make opinions the test of fellowship; now they are contending with warmth about some matter of opinion. The people of course will say to such preachers, 'Reform yourselves, and then preach reformation to us.'

I know that a difference of opinion on a variety of subjects, may, and perhaps does exist among us all; there are, perhaps, no two of us, who think exactly alike on every subject; and though we hold opinions as private property, yet we ought not to urge them before the public. Last Spring a brother Winter and myself rode a while together, and we adopted the following course—not to touch those matters of opinion upon which we differed, publickly, but unite all our energies in pleading the cause of the Bible, and urging the importance of obedience: and when we were alone, examine with care the foundation of every opinion, and every impropriety, mistake, or misaplication. Was this a prudent course? If not, let some brother show a better way. Some preachers are restless, ambitious and aspiring to worldly honors, and preferment. Vain men! 'They are seeking the honor of man, and not the honor that comes from God only.' Some indeed so far forget themselves as to become candidates for posts of honor and profit in the civil department! So did not the primitive christians. They were subject to every ordinance of Cæsar's government, for conscience sake, but took no part in lawmaking. Let us profit by their example.